Sold by Io: Martyn at ye Bell without Temple Bar.

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Enter into thy Closet:

OR, A

METHOD

AND

ORDER

FOR PRIVATE

DEVOTION.

TOGETHER

With particular Perſwaſives thereunto, and Helps therein.

AND

(In this ſecond Edition)

AN APPENDIX

Concerning the Frequent and Holy Uſe

OF THE

LORDS SUPPER.

By Bishop Wilkinshall.

Zech. 3. 2. *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire?*

London, Printed for *John Martyn*, and are to be ſold at the *Bell* a little without *Temple-Bar*, 1668.

A METHOD AND ORDER FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION.

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(In this Second Edition)

AN APPENDIX

Concerning the Frequent and Holy Life

OF THE

LORDS SUPPER.

AN ADMONITION TO THE READER.

WHat it is the fashion to call an *Epistle to the Reader*, or, if it be somewhat longer, a *Preface*, the Author stiled an *Admonition*, or *Advertisement to the Reader*, that by a more unusual title he might the more surely draw him to read it, before he doth the Book.

And the first thing, which he admonisheth thee of, Good Reader, is, that thou neither question nor scruple what judgment he is of, before thou hast considered what he here saith: nor that when thou shalt have read a little way into the book, thou make such conjectures of its Authors opinion, as to conclude the book fit only to be laid aside by thee, because he, who writ it, may haply dissent from thee in some matters. He very little med-

meddles with any matters here, in which it is likely that any ſober Chriſtian diſſents from him. A diſrelliſhing expreſſion, or a chapter ſhould not be warrant enough to thee for thy ſentencing him this or that, and rejecting what elſe he ſays for thine and common good. Perhaps he may make mention of a *Common-prayer-Book*, or *Holy days*, only to draw in them, who will hear of no devotion which rejects theſe, but

execrate it ſtill as *Fanatical*, to the reading his Book, and thereby to a more ſerious and Chriſtian uſe of thoſe things, than what all are guilty of. Perhaps, on the other ſide, he may be in good earneſt, and thinking them right Chriſtian and uſeful, commend them to thy practice, and direct thee, ſo to uſe them, as that thou ſhalt by ſuch uſe of them begin leſs to quarrel with them. Either deſign is honeſt, and it is no matter whether

whether it is, which he hath, nor who, or what he is. He would onely have thee to take him for a man of ſerious and ſober principles, and one who would have all that profeſs Chriſtianity to be ſuch alſo: (and ſuch thou muſt either take him to be, or elſe, being that thou knoweſt him not, and ſo canſt not know him to be otherwiſe, thou art uncharitable:) And as being ſuch, that, which he endeavours here, is to bring thee ſeriouſly upon thy

knees before God, there to examine thine heart and actions according to that Christian rule, which indispensibly enjoyns thee Charity, Meekness, Moderation, Peaceableness, and such sweet Virtues; which if thou do but use thy self to, thou wilt judge thy self no otherwise a Christian than as these Christian Graces are in thee, and receive as a new-born-Babe, the sincere milk of the doctrine of godliness, come it to thee in what vessels soever. Ano-

Another thing, which he hath to adviſe thee of, is matter of direction in the uſe of this Book: in which caſe his deſire to thee is, that thou wilt firſt read over the Table, which is at the beginning of it, and mark the ſubſtance of what he there promiſeth to treat of; that then if thou reſolve to make uſe of this method for thy devotion (and, the Author thinks thou wilt, if thou have the patience to conſider it, and canſt obtain leiſure of thy

ſelf to practice it, that thou wilt read the Book once or twice over, and endeavour, by attent conſideration to underſtand it; and when thou haſt once got the Book thus into thine head, the practice will ſoon grow eaſie (he is ſure, at leaſt, moſt ſweet and bleſſedly delightful.) Be but perſwaded to try it one month or two, and ſee if thou canſt find in thy heart to be ſo injurious to thine own felicity, as to lay it aſide again.

Some-

Somewhat too there ſhould be ſaid as to what is likely to be objected againſt the contents hereof. It may haply be conceived there are here ſome practices directed to in ordinary Devotions, which are too high for every mans reach (as is meditating upon Scripture, in ſuch ſort as is here taught, endeavouring the mortification of ſin in ſuch rational methods, *&c.*) ſome circumſtances too, as to the place of retirement,

unneceſſary, or above moſt mens conditions, &c. As to the former of which, the Authors anſwer is, that patterns of this nature muſt not be ſet too low, for that men are apt rather to aim under than over; that he thinks there is very little of practice here, by which a plain capacity may not underſtand ſomewhat, which he will conclude to be his duty, though it may be he reach not all in that caſe; and further both as to this and

to

to the latter point ſuppoſed to be objected, that the higher matters and more curious circumſtances are commended onely to men of abilities, eſtates and leiſure ſuitable: Let all go as high as they can, and their devotions will be ſure to be more compleat, than if they had aimed lower.

Now, which is all that ſhall be added, poſſibly ſome may think ſuch Books as theſe needleſs at preſent, after ſo many extant in this kind already.

Here-

Hereunto the Authors Apology might be, that the number of ſuch books is much at preſent leſſened by thoſe mercileſs flames, out of which the providence of God ſaved this Book, (when it was in a manner all printed off ſave this Preface) that this preſervation of it is ſome excuſe for its appearance, and preſage that it may not be altogether fruitleſs: But this being waved, that whieh was his anſwer in the Preface, which thoſe fore-

forementioned flames consumed, when the Book it self escaped, is, that he is not much read in our English Books, and so knows not what or how many of this nature are extant; but that of those, which it hath been his lot to see, he knows none, which do more aim at the hitting the *genius* and humour of every mans devotion (be he of what judgment he will) than he hath done in this; and that, be the Reader a conformable person, or any of

of the contrary perſwaſi-
ons, if he be but ſerious,
and reſolved not to reject
the main, which he cannot
but like, for a page or
two, which though he may
not much brook, yet he
can ſcarce be very angry
with; the Author believes
ſuch perſon will not think
his pains to no purpoſe:
However, that, in this hope
he cannot but be confi-
dent, that the meer wri-
ting and publiſhing hereof
will be a perpetual engage-
ment to himſelf of a more

ſtrict

ſtrict and circumſpect life; and that therefore, if in none other, yet in this reſpect, it comes not forth in vain: To which purpoſe he deſires thee (good Reader) to help him with thy Prayers, as he hath endeavoured to help thee by the following Advice.

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Enter

Enter into thy Closet.

OR A METHOD For private Devotion.

BIBLIOTHECA

Part. I. Chap. 1.

Of the necessity of Privacy, and those Christian duties which require it.

THat person can no wise be esteemed a serious and through Christian, uprightly and cordially discharging his duty towards God, who is a stranger unto privacy, and useth not to withdraw himself from company, even

Part. I. Chap. I.

the company of his neareſt friends, preſenting himſelf alone before God: For that beſides the worſhip of God, which we perform to him in the *publick aſſemblies*, and joyntly with the reſt of the *Family*, of which we are members, beſides, I ſay, praying, hearing, and receiving, &c. in the Church, and praying with the people of our own houſe, there are ſeveral religious duties to be performed by us, without which the power of godlineſs can never be kept alive in our hearts, nor the ſervice, which before or with others we do unto God Almighty, be through, hearty and compleat; which duties can never be performed as they ſhould be, if we are in company. To wit,

Firſt, it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary that a Chriſtian often examine himſelf, take account of his own ſtate and actions, whether his heart be ſo ſtedfaſt in holy purpoſes as it hath been or ought to be, or as he hath vowed to God it ſhould be: whether his practice

practices of late have been answerable to such resolutions and engagements, as he hath made: or whether his heart be more indifferent and careless than it was, his actions more loose and irregular; This, I say, is absolutely necessary to an holy life: for that without it, he may insensibly go back and grow worse, he may delay his returns unto God, or not return after several wandrings, and if (suddenly catcht) die without the particular repentance of many sins. Part. I. Chap. 1.

Secondly, it is as necessary that a Christian confess himself to Almighty God, that is, that having taken such an account of his wandrings, he acknowledge them, bewail them and beg pardon of them before God.

Thirdly, because repentance cannot be without reformation, it is necessary that he consult and consider with himself how he may grow better; what occasions of his sins there were, which may be avoided;

Part. I. Chap. 1.

what means of the contrary virtues, which may be used; and resolve seriously with himself, that these and these occasions he will avoid, these and these means use.

Now forasmuch as such resolutions can never be upright and firm, except made with deliberation, heed and thoughtfulness; and forasmuch as such deliberation cannot be taken in company, nor all things duly weighed, where we have a crowd of occasions and objects to take off our thoughts, it is therefore necessary that for such work we be alone. and in the other cases because that examination of our selves must needs be very slighty and short, which we make while we sit and talk with others; because also those confessions, which we make in pulick or with others, may be, and most frequently are, too general to reach our particular cases and sins, it is therefore necessary for the doing of them also, that we retire or go alone.

And

And to conclude, becauſe he that would keep himſelf cloſe to the ways of holineſs, muſt do all theſe things often, it is therefore neceſſary, that he be often alone, at leaſt as often as with any tollerable convenience he can, and, to that purpoſe, if his condition admit or will afford it, that he have a place convenient to retire to, which we will call a *Cloſet*,

Chap. II.

Of the ſituation and furniture of their Cloſet who have choice.

NOw (it being ſuppoſed that my condition allows me ſo much choice, as that I might have it ſo) my *Cloſet* would I have no unpleaſant place, as ſweetly ſituated as any place of my houſe, that I might delight to be therein; and by no means a low or darkſome room, but

Part. I. Chap. 2.

as high as I well could: for that ſo it will be moſt remote from the noiſe, company, and diſturbance of the people who are buſied uſually below; and beſides that, ſome ſecret property there is in ſuch high and eminent places, whence we may behold the heavens and overlook the earth, which to me much raiſeth the ſoul and elevates the affections, as if we derived or partaked more from heaven, by how much nearer we come to it. Our *Saviour* therefore uſed to go up *into a mountain to pray*: and *St. Peter went up upon the houſe* for the ſame purpoſe, that is probably into an upper room ſuch as the *Diſciples* were aſſembled in. And if it might be my paſſage thereunto ſhould be through two other outer rooms, at leaſt through one, the door or doors of which I might ever have ſhut when I thither retired, to the end that my voice, which many times I ſhall have occaſion, for my own quickening, to uſe, might not to be heard without.

Acts 10. 9.

Acts 1. 13. & 20. 8.

The

Part. I. Chap. 2.

The furniture of my closet I would have a little more, than that of *Elisha's* chamber, *A Table, a Stool and a Candlestick*: and instead of his bed an hard *couch* or great chair on which I might some times lean my weary or aching head: But a couch the rather for that sometimes I haply might find it necessary to spend the whole night there, and might thereon take some repose. To these I would add a *Bible*, a *Common prayer book*, two *paper books* (which when fill'd must be supplyed by two others) and a *Pen* and *Ink*. Another book or two (of which hereafter) I may also see occasion to add to these. A chimney, against winters cold, to make the place endurable, if need be, a whole night, would be no contemptible convenience. If besides these, I there keep any thing, as Students do books, Gentlemen writings, and Ladies Medicins, *&c.* all these I would have placed on one side, or at least, one side I would have free from them,

2 Kings 4. 10.

Part. I. Chap. 2.

againſt which ſhould either ſtand a table, or a *Praying deſk* (that when occaſion ſhould be I might lay a book or paper before me) and the wall over ſuch desk or table ſhould be hung (if I were able to do it) with ſome ſtuff, of one colour, (Green the beſt) to the end that when there kneeling at my prayers, I might have in mine eye nothing to call away or divert my thoughts.

To any man, whoſe genius this propoſal ſuits not with, I offer that practice of *Daniel* (chap. 6. 10.) who *opening his window* or caſement kneeled down with his face thitherward and prayed. By this means the mind, by the ſight of the viſible heavens, is carried in its thoughts into the inviſible, and more ſtrongly contemplates and adores the Creator of all there dwelling. But this is onely practicable in the Countrey, or places of great privacy, & not at all ſeaſons, becauſe of the injuries of weather. I therefore prefer the other at leaſt for conſtancy: both may be uſed in ſeaſon.

Chap.

Chap. III.

Of moſt Common entrance into the Cloſet.

MY *Cloſet* being thus *fitted*, it is ſuppoſed that my recourſe thereto is either more or leſs ſolemn. At no time (except upon moſt earneſt and haſty occaſions) ſhould my entrance thereto, want the ſolemnity of a *ſhort* (but hearty) *Prayer*, For this being a place principally deſigned for my devout retirement, and the performance of thoſe private acts of worſhip which I owe to God, it becomes, by this its end and deſignment, after a ſort ſeparate or ſacred, a certain ſecret Chappel for my ſelf; and may not therefore wantonly or ſlightly be by me entred into. I ſay, not by *Me*: for what ever it is to others to me ought it to be reverend. As therefore, when our ordinary occaſions

Part I. Chap. 3.

call us into (or) through Churches we uſually out of Reverence to him, to whom thoſe places are devoted, and in memory of thoſe ſpiritual feaſts, which we or our Chriſtian brethren have there and in ſuch places taſted, fall down on our knees and worſhip God, begging his bleſſing upon us and his people, as often as there aſſembled, and praiſing him for the benefits which we or his people have there partaken of; ſo when I come, though upon common matters, into my cloſet, yet conſidering with my ſelf, that I am now in that place, wherein I have ſo often worſhipped (or at leaſt reſolved often to worſhip) God, and had ſweet converſe with him, in memory thereof, and for reaſons hereafter mentioned I would kneel down and pray, to this or the like effect.

My good God, whom I here frequently and with my heart worſhip, Bleſs me I beſeech

ſeech thee in the affairs I go about. Keep my heart with thee, at leaſt ever keep it upright before thee: And as often as I here preſent my ſelf, let thy good Spirit be preſent with me, to diſpoſe me unto, and aſſiſt me in thy ſervice, through Jeſus Chriſt my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

And having thus or otherwiſe, as I am able, or have opportunity, prayed, I would forthwith apply my ſelf to what I intended.

Now ſuch courſe obſerved, as often as I enter my *Cloſet*, will be many ways advantageous to me: Firſt, it will be a means to keep my heart much with God, and to recall it to him, in caſe my thoughts have too much wandred from him. It will make me ſpiritual in ordinary matters and converſe. Secondly, it may be a means to procure a bleſſing upon my undertakings. Thirdly,

Part I. Chap. 3.

I may the better expect Gods presence there, when I come purposely to seek him.

It needs not after this discourse, to admonish that we ever take heed what matters here we do. I would not choose this as a place of my vainer discourse, or freer hours, as some do: who are ever severest in company, and allow themselves liberty in private or amongst their confidents, whom if they can but get into such a place, where neither mens eye, nor ear can reach them (as the closet for the main is supposed to be) their company shall be vain and frolick to as high a degree almost as any mens, *I take it, and I am greatly deceived if I mistake it, for a certain argument, that the serious belief of a God and of the World to come, is much wanting in his heart, who dare be naught, idle, or sinfully merry, if he can but get out of mans sight and cognizance.*

Part II.

Treating of *Daily Closet-Duties.*

Chap. I.

That if I am a person of leisure, I ought daily, twice in the day, to retire into my Closet *for devotions sake.*

IT followeth now to be considered of my more solemn retirement or entrance into my *Closet.* Now that I account a solemn recourse thither, when my business there is purely devotion. And such recourse is either ordinary, or more special.

My

Part II. Chap. I.

My ordinary retirement into my *Closet* ſhould be daily, and that if my condition will conveniently admit, as moſt mens may twice a day: oftener I may, as at noon, ſeldomer I well cannot,

I am bound thereto upon the ſame grounds, upon which I am bound to pray twice a day: and the ſum of them is, that the command ſaith, *Pray continually*; the meaning of which we cannot but take to be, (1) either pray always when you may for other duties (that is, ſo much time as thou canſt ſpare from the work of thy calling and due care of thy body, and other offices of Charity and Piety, ſpend in that duty of prayer) or elſe (2.) (parallel to that of the *continual burnt Offering* which was called *Continual*, becauſe ever *continued* in its courſe twice a day.) Keep a continual courſe of prayer morning and evening. And this the practices of the Saints in Scripture (which we may look upon as Exemplifications of

of that forenamed command) to wit, the Practice of David praying *Evening, Morning, and at Noon*, of *Daniel* as many times, and none that we read of less than twice, cannot but enforce upon us, as the least which can be our duty in this case. Part. II. Chap. 1. Psal. 55. 7. Dan. 6. 10.

If any think they are excused from private prayer twice a day, by their praying twice a day with the Family, of which they are a part, They are to understand, that there is no particular strict command, touching the nature of our daily devotions, prescribing them to be either publick or private, or both: but that it is most just and equitable that *God should have a liberal part of our time, as well as of our estates*: that therefore if our condition be such, that besides the time, which we spend in prayer with the Family (which no one, who would have God to bless his Family, can think he may neglect) we have convenient leisure from other necessary matters, it cannot be better bestowed Dr. Hamm. Pract. Catech. Lib. 3. Sect. 2.

Part II. Chap. I.

ed, than in our *Closet*, and upon our *Souls*. And it will questionless be a piece of very sinful vanity, to trifle it away, and omit what it might so well have been imployed upon; According as in matter of my estate, if after sufficient necessaries and conveniencies provided for my self and Family, there do yet remain in my hand a portion of what God hath given me, I cannot but look upon it as my duty to supply therewith the necessities of those who want, and as my sin, for me idly to squander it away, which might have fill'd so many hungry bellies, or cloathed so many naked or ragged backs. Further, God having injoyned me the duty of prayer, but left the particular frequency of it, after the nature of other freewill offerings, to my Christian discretion, I ought not to be therefore the more heedless; but rather, because I know my sacrifice will be ever accepted how often soever brought with an honest heart, out of an holy ambition

ambition of pleasing God and sending up an odour of a sweet savour unto heaven, to bring it as often as I can: And surely twice a day I may present even my private devotions.

If I be single and in my own power, there is no question but I may: If I be the Master or Mistris of a Family, there is little question of it: If I be a servant, or one who works for my living, there is indeed somewhat the more question; for that not only I may be straightned in time, but want the conveniency of privacy, But yet even in this case, what hinders, but that being I cannot do so well as I would, I may do so well as I can? to wit, rising one piece of an hour ordinarily sooner, or lying down so much later, fall down upon my knees by my self at my beds side, and privately pour out my confessions and prayers before God. And what if my fellow servant be with me? Why should I be ashamed to do, before him

Part. II. Chap. 1.

him, what he cannot but acknowledg he alſo ought to do? ſhall I not one day much more bluſh and be confounded at the omiſſion of my duty before *Men* and *Angels* and *God* himſelf, than here at the performance of it? And which ſhame rather to be choſen? That before God, all Men, Angels, Devils, than this before one or two? That which is eternal, or this, which after I have once or twice deſpiſed, I ſhall be troubled with no more? that which hath a real ground in turpitude and ſin, or this which ariſeth onely from a fooliſh baſhfulneſs? Begin to do ſo, and after the firſt or ſecond time, thou wilt never be aſhamed of it: I aſſure the at leaſt thou wilt never repent.

This then ſhould be my ordinary retirement twice a day.

Our more ſpecial retirement ought to be upon *Lords days*, *Holy days*, and our own *private Faſt-days*, each of which will come hereafter to be conſidered. In the mean time

time our daily retirement and devotions must be proceeded with.

Chap. II.

Considerations to perswade to daily devotion and prayer in private.

AND to the end I may be sure to keep such course as beforesaid, let me sit down and seriously weigh.

First, the concernment, importance and vast moment of those things, which by prayer I am to seek and may obtain, above the other, upon which most of my time is spent. What is it of worldly goods, which will not pass away (at least as to me and my injoyment of it) with my self? I dying, all dies with me: my estate, my honours, my friends, and all such, are no more comfortable to me, when death once appears, but happily a torment, being that

Part. II. Chap. 2. that they are all now to be left. It is therefore but to the end of my threescore years and ten (if I should live so long) or thereabouts, that these can be good at all: And of these my threescore years and ten (which it is a thousand to one whether ever I reach) how many are already gone? Perhaps one Moyety, perhaps more. So then all those things which my other time seeks, are of a pitiful short and transient concernment. But the graces of Gods spirit, an holy heart, a good conscience, reconciliation with my heavenly Father, these and such like, are not only of concernment for my present happiness, but for my eternal. The richest, honorablest and most worldly happy Man, if devoid of grace, an enemy unto God, conscious to himself of villany, cannot in all his abundance here enjoy or like himself, much less either account himself, or be accounted, an happy person. For what can that Man acquiesce in, whose own

own heart calling him a rogue lays a fatal neceſſity upon him to hate and to be ever and anon ready to execrate himſelf? Certainly there is no preſent poſſible happineſſe, which is comparable to that bleſſed calm and quiet, which ariſeth from the ſenſe of a Mans own upright heart and diſcharged duty. Inſomuch that were there no ſuch thing as an heaven to come, I ſhould not fear to pronounce, that that man neglects thoſe things which are of greateſt conducement to his preſent happineſs, who neglects to ſeek unto God, to commune with his own heart, to ſet all ſtraight and to reclaim himſelf to an holy life, the great means by which ſuch peace, the moſt real felicity in the world, can be had. But ſuppoſe we ſuch a perſon ready to die, *and it ſaid unto him, Thou fool this night ſhall thy ſoul be taken from thee*; his peace being unmade with God, himſelf unacquainted with heaven, his conſcience telling him that all his time

Luk 12. 20.

hath

Part. II. Chap. 2.

hath been ſpent on what he muſt now leave, and no proviſion made (but of a *treaſure of wrath againſt the day of wrath*) for that eternal ſtate, into which death is his entrance; is he not now a moſt unhappy wretch? Is it not to him a pain equal to the pains of death to think he muſt leave all? Hath he not therefore by devoting himſelf ſo to this world, and ſcraping together ſuch an ample portion thereof, only made himſelf more miſerable, and that in this preſent life? For is there any miſery here, like to that anguiſh, which racks ſuch a ſoul upon his now inſtant departure? And would I, then, ſo ſpend my time as that I might, by the ſpending of it, become more miſerable than any, ſave thoſe who have lived as I? Would I ſo ſpend it, as that the very thinking or reflecting how I had ſpent it, ſhould then moſt torment me, when I have moſt need of comfort, to wit in my dying hour? And yet thus do all men ſpend their days who

Rom. 11. 12.

who neglect their devotions, or duties of daily addresse unto God. Part II. Chap. 2.

But further, suppose we such a person dead; and we have him stript of all even his imaginary happiness, naked of every thing save his sins: Of these *his bones are full and they shall lye down with him in the dust:* His *works follow* him and his *wayes* meet him. Evident therefore it is, that what he hath spent his life upon, is now of no concernment or moment to him at all, any otherwise, than to render him for ever as miserable as he can be. And is this a desirable end for a man all his days to be driving at; to be miserable in life by reason of an evil conscience, or an impossibility of liking and loving himself; to be miserable in death, by the advancing of that disquiet, his former torment; and most miserable after death by the perfection of that and all other mischiefs? Whereas, if some of those days which the world employed had been taken up in seeking unto God, Job 20. 11.

Part. II. Chap. 2.

God, how might that portion have sanctified all the rest, have led him to a right improvement of what he got, and that improvement of all been an unspeakable pleasure and content to him here, and hereafter have wrought him an eternity of blessedness! Not to mention that unspeakable satisfaction, which the hearty performance of such devotions, through the bloud of Christ, would have filled him with, which we may hereafter consider. Whoso therefore truly loves himself will love his *Closet* and his *Prayers*.

Secondly, Let me weigh the *Reasonableness* hereof, that *God* should have a *considerable part* of my *Time*, who hath given me *so much* for my *self*, and the *unreasonableness* of the *contrary*. Let me deal ingeniously; may not God well expect more of my time, than what is by any law set apart or consecrate to this worship? And it being the genuine Evangelical sense of the fourth commandement, Keep all thy life an *ho*

ly rest from doing thy own works de-lighting thy self and acquiescing ever in *the Lord*, will it not in a good measure hold thus, Rest as much as thou canst to thy devotions, spend as many hours as thou canst with God? Or suppose that this Law would not in equity bind me hereunto (which yet it seems to do) is it not reasonable that there should be free-will-offerings of our time as well as of our estates? And will there be any better way found for the imploying of what we can spare thereof, than the thus sanctifying and devoting it unto God? I am confident whatever mens practices may be, their consciences cannot gainsay but do highly approve and commend to them what is pressed. We may complain fondly of the *shortness of time*: but evident it is that we *spend much* upon this world; much upon our gains, much upon our pleasures, much upon our ambitions, much also upon those necessary acts of life, Eating, Drink-

Part II. Chap. 2.

Isaiah 58. 13, 14.

Part 2. Chap. II.

ing, Sleeping, and much too upon (God knows) we know not what. Now let those who account themselves to have least leisure, find but time enough to consider, when they go to bed every night, how much time they have lost, or trifled away, that day, and setting it down every night, reckon at the weeks end, and see, to how many hours it will amount. Do so but one week or two, and see if you do not blush at the ordinary excuse for neglect of prayer, that you have not time. For the issue will be of these two, the one, either my whole time hath been really imployed, and that upon my common affairs and necessary care of my body, or else some part of it (to wit, so much as hath not been imployed) hath been trifled away. Now, (*utrum horum.*) Let me take which I please. If it be supposed all to have been imployed, is it not most unreasonable, that worldly business and my body should have all, and God and my soul have none, or

next

next to none? Did God make me for himself, and allot me such a measure of time for his glory and for provision for my soul, and are they only some few minutes, which I can find either for him or it? Was, I say, every day given me for these ends, and can I spend all without considerable seeking either, as I do if I allow nothing to private devotion? *Ought I not therefore to lessen my business, rather than neglect the great ends of my being?* If, on the other side, a considerable part of my time were lost and trifled away (as I dare say infallibly it will appear upon due account taken) is not this a most unreasonable part in me, that I can find *time to loose*, and yet *no time to pray?*

And further, Thirdly, it may somewhat quicken me, if I consider, that though it should be questioned whether it be strictly my duty *thus and thus oft to pray*, because there may seem to be wanting an express command, yet I cannot but be sensi-

Part. II. Chap. 2.

ble that it is my duty *to pray, and to pray often,* (for this there are not wanting commands) and that therefore prayer being a duty and well-pleasing unto God, the more thereof is performed, the more acceptable service do I do to God: provided prayer thrust not out my other duties, The frequency, I say, can never offend, except in the case of neglecting other duties to perform it: and herein commonly men are not apt to be guilty. Suppose it therefore not to offend in this case being that it is a duty, it must please, and please the more, by how much it self is more. Now this to ingenuity is no mean incentive unto prayer, that hereby I please my God, and delight heaven.

Fourthly, Let me consider, that as Prayer it self is the most powerful and effectual means, that a Christian can use for the effecting of all he would, so there is no prayer more powerful than that which is most frequent and importunate. In general

general, as to the power of prayer, it is such that it seems to have done violence to omnipotency it self; as in the case of *Moses* when God as though graciously held or restrained bids him *let him alone:* and in some causes, if duely performed, God hath as it were allowed it to *command* him. But what or whose prayers are they, which are thus powerful? Surely not theirs, who so seldom come to heaven, that if it were for nothing else, but because they are such strangers, they would not speed: but theirs rather, whose daily and frequent application of themselves to the throne of grace, hath rendred them there well acquainted and favourites. We may therefore observe, that *the most absolute and encouraging promises of being heard, are made to the importunate suitors.* The widdow in the parable, whom injustice it self could not deny, was such, and therefore sped because such, because she came so often. And that precept, each

Part II. Chap. 2.

Exo. 32. 10.

Isai. 45. 2.

Luk 18.

Part II. Chap. 2.

gradation of which hath a promise proportionably attemperated and fitted thereunto, as it prescribes, so chiefly encourageth importunity, that is, *frequency* as well as *fervency*. It is not said, onely *Ask*, nor onely *Seek*, but both, and *Knock* besides. The last alone, *viz.* Knocking, implies frequency, and therefore much more do all the three. And to the *Knocking*, as being of all the three the clearest denotation or expression of importunity, it is promised *It shall be opened*: as if it had been said, those who onely *ask* and *seek* may come to *speed*: but those who *knock*, those who are oft and earnest in their prayers, shall have the treasures of heaven *opened* and free to them, out of which to take full satisfaction and supply.

Mrt. 7.7.

Now because all these things are so, therefore can it not be, but that the benefit of such practice must be *unspeakable*, which as another (and for the present the last) incitement unto daily private devotion is worthy

worthy my consideration. First, as to the inward temper of my heart (which rightly to dispose, and so disposed to keep, is a matter of the greatest concernment to an holy life) there can be nothing thought of more effectual than such practice: nor can it indeed well be conceived, how that mans heart can be kept in a thorow sense of his duty, and close with God, who maintains not some such daily course of devotion as is under present consideration. Part 2. Chap. II.

1. The maintaining hereof will keep alive in me a continual fear and awful apprehension of God: it will habituate me, in all my ways, often to think upon and remember him. Now *there is nothing, the apprehension of which is of more wholesome consequence unto a man, than of God and his all-seeing eye.* One, who is sensible and mindful hereof, cannot be long vain, but, if he do forget himself at any time, will soon return to his old seriousness.

2. Such practice will also much conduce to the keeping of me humble, as being sensible of (becaus often minding) my sins: my sins I say from my youth up to my present years, my perpetual pronesse and frequent relapses unto vicious courses. These being matter of my daily confessions, thoughts and meditations, cannot but in some good measure keep under any towring or proud conceits, which I am apt to have of my self.

3. It will also make and keep me tender, affectionate, and truly Zealous in my service of God. There will be in me an habitual preparation for all duties; insomuch that I can no sooner be at them and have engaged my self in them, but with a great deal of vivacity and readiness of Spirit, and with many inward meltings of heart I shall converse in them: this being not onely my daily but my frequent practice, at least frequent endeavour.

4. It must therefore much increase

crease all manner of Christian graces in my Soul inasmuch as grace according as we now speak thereof, is nothing else but the due disposition and resolution of the soul, which as is evident will be the natural consequent and fruit of such practice. Part II. Chap. 2.

Secondly, it will have a very wholesome influence upon my life, as in all cases else, so especially in this, that I shall at no time carry on any design which I dare not bring unto the test of heaven, and beg thereon the blessing of the God of Holiness.

Lastly, the mercies which I receive in my own person, in my relations, in all my affairs as procured and impetrated from God by these my daily and frequent prayers will be innumerable; and that inward comfort and cleerness of heart, with which I shall entertain and receive these mercies, or any thing else, which comes from the hand of my gracious God, inexpressible. The same mercies evidently are not

Part II. Chap. 2.

the same to all men, no more than are the same chastisements. But to whomsoever mercies are greater mercies, or afflictions less afflictions, it cannot be, but that to him who thus conscienciously daily converseth with God, all must be most kindly.

Now the consideration of all, which I have thus meditated, cannot sure but move me to some measure of diligence in these duties. If therefore at any time negligence begin to grow over me, it may be of good effect to read over and duly to weigh these or the like motives, that I may be quickened to resume, and proceeed with, my proposed course: and what that course should be, it follows in the next place that I consult.

Chap. III.

Of the ſubſtance of every days private devotion; To perſons of leiſure, Reading Meditation *and* Prayer.

THe private devotion of every day will be different to particular perſons, according as their conditions differ. From ſuch who are ſervants or lead a ſervile life (I mean all thoſe who get their living by their daily labour, whoſe abilities of mind are therefore meaner and whoſe privacy more difficult) from ſuch I ſay no more than this may ſeem to be expected, that both in the morning being riſen, and at night being about to lye down, they in the fear of God fall down before him and pray unto him; touching which Directions will anon ſollow.

From thoſe, whoſe way of life being more liberal, their abilities

Part II Chap. 3.

and opportunities are greater, more may seem justly to be looked for, according to that rule, *To whom much is given, from them shall much be required.* Speaking therefore to such who have estates and leisure, and so may have opportune privacy, I suppose their daily private devotion cannot be compleat, except consisting of *Reading*, *Meditation* and *Prayer.*

Luk 12. 48.

Touching *private Prayer* it hath been before spoken and nothing now can by such, whom the present consultation concerneth, be said for the dispensing with it, being it is even their duty, who are of meaner quality and capacity and therefore much more theirs, who are of greater. Touching *Reading* and *Meditation*, if any suspition arise, it will easily be removed by those commands, which enjoyn us that we *Search* diligently *the Scriptures, that the word of God dwell plentifully in us*, &c. and by such Characters of righteous persons, as that they are such

John 5. 39. Ἐρευνᾶν

Coloss. 3. 16.

such *whose delight is in the Law of the Lord*, and who *meditate therein day and night*. And certainly such commands being capable to be intended or remitted (I mean being to be construed with some regard) and according to that general rule aforementioned [*to whom much is given from him much shall be required*,] cannot but be interpreted to require greater and more diligent *Searching* (that is more of *Reading* and *Meditating* upon) Scripture, from those, who have greater opportunity and ability to do it, than they do from others, who are meaner in both. Of such an one therefore, who hath not time every day, or if he haply have, yet cannot read, it may be thought he discharged his duty of *searching the Scripture*, if in a way proportionable to his ability he endeavour to acquaint himself with Scripture, to wit; by a diligent attention to it, and inquiring of it (as he hath conveniency) when it is read or preached. But of such an one,

Part II. Chap. 3. Psal. 1.

Part II. Chap. 3.

one, who can *read* and hath time to *meditate* on what he reads, and whom, it may be, it concerns to instruct others in the knowledge of Scripture (as being over them) of such an one, I say, being that more is required, than of the other, it cannot in reason be thought, that he hath done his duty by bare attention unto Scripture read, except he himself read and meditate therein. And he will very hardly (we may not fear to say, not at all) approve himself to be a Godly man, if he behave not himself as Godly men did of old, that is, if he *delight not in the Law of the Lord*, and therein daily *meditate*. If I should doubt therefore, whether it be strictly my duty *day* and *night*, *morning* and *evening* to read the Scriptures and meditate, I cannot doubt (for I see plain evidence for it) that it is a Godly mans Character, one part of his practice as he is a Godly man, to *read* and *meditate*, if therefore I intend to be a Godly man, it must be my care and practice too. Where-

Wherefore of these three, *Reading*, *Meditation* and *Prayer*, seeing that none may be well omitted (at least not ordinarily neglected) it is requisite more particular consideration be had.

Chap. IIII.

Of Reading the Holy Scripture. The most edifying method and manner of Reading it consulted of.

BY *Reading* here I understand reading the sole word of God: and this as it should constantly (for the main at least, if not ever) have a place in my daily devotions in private, so therein, me thinks, will most conveniently take place in the beginning of them, on this wise. Being entred into my *Closet* for my devotions sake, it becomes me first in all humility and out of the fear of God, not out of custom, to fall down

Part II. Chap. 4.

down before him, and in ſhort according to former direction to beg his bleſſing upon me and preſence with me there preſenting my ſelf to worſhip before his majeſty: To which purpoſe the Form * already delivered may be proper either for uſe, or further direction, according as I ſhall ſee fit. This being done, forthwith let me apply my ſelf to the reading ſome portion of the word, according to my prefixed courſe. And what courſe ſhall that be?

* Part I. Chap. 3.

Modeſty would preſently anſwer, The ſame which the wiſdom of the Church hath preſcribed for publick uſe. And the truth is (the Church conſulting herein, as ſhe ought, the edification of the people) this order hath, in this point, the advantage of all other, that it will lead us to read over all the moſt uſeful parts of Scripture and thoſe moſt frequently: to wit, the New Teſtament, excepting onely ſome Chapters of the *Revelation*, three times a year; the

Pſalms

Psalms once a month; the *Old* Testament (excepting onely the two books of *Chronicles*, which are for the most part extant in the *Kings* and *Samuel*, and some other Chapters of other books, chiefly relating to the *Jewish* state) once in a year. But then if we consider its complyance with our present designe, it hath these two exceptions lying against it. First, that the portions of Scripture, by that order to be read daily, are greater than what every mans or most mens conveniency will afford time to read, and meditate upon, as it is (supposed at present) best for a devout Christian to do. And then Secondly, that by this means a considerable part of the *Old* Testament and some part of the *New* will be left out; which parts are not questionless without their use, though comparatively, not so necessary for the publick commonalty as the other. And to the Churches prescription it may be said, that it was never the Churches intention

to

Part II. Chap. 4.

to prescribe this order for men *Closets* in private, where she can neither take notice of their observing nor neglecting it, but onely for publick edification and uniformity.

This order therefore being taken not to be so proper for our present purpose, the next which will offer it self, will be the natural order of the books in which they lye. Now this though not liable to the exceptions, which we found against the former (being that nothing then will be omitted, nor the Reader overburdened with too great a portion, being he is left to himself) yet hath this inconveniency, that it will detain the observer of it a great while in those parts of Scripture, which may not edifie him so much, as would the other: so that haply *Reading* shall be a duller and lesse spiritual an exercise, that it would be, did he more wisely order it. Yet hath it this advantage also, that the *Revelations* of God and eternal life being still clearer in each succeeding part of

Scripture

Scripture (I mean clearer in the *Prophets* than in the *Law* and in the *Gospel* than in either) one months reading may make me see more into that of the former month, and all lead me to the magnifying of God for the present manifest Revelation of his will.

These things being so, it may haply conduce most to our private edification if we keep strictly to neither of these orders, but observing the conveniences and inconveniences of each to our private purpose, according to our Christian discretion frame to our selves one out of both, which may have the commodities of both, and incommodity of neither. And that may be such as this: To begin every Reading with a *Psalm*, or, where the *Psalms* are very long, with a good portion of one, taking the *Psalms* in their course: (This I therefore commend, by reason of the exceeding usefulness of that book of *Psalms* for prayer, it furnishing a man with petitions

Part II. Chap. 4.

petitions, hymns and ejaculations of all sorts, and besides discovering very much of the hearty practice of *Devotion* and *Godliness*) That being finisht, in the morning to take in order as the Books and Chapters lye, such a portion of the *Old* Testament, as my Christian prudence, considering my own conveniences and occasions, shall judge fit: which where the matter affords more work for *Meditation*, may be shorter; where less, larger. In like manner at evening, beginning with a like portion of the *Psalms*, take a part of the *New* Testament, as it lyes in order, greater or less, according, as beforesaid, it finds my devotion work. Some such course as this would I observe, till I had read over the *Holy* Scripture twice or thrice with such care, attention and meditation, as shall presently be described; by which time I should begin to be a little vers'd in it, and to know what parts of Scripture I use to read with greatest Christian advantage

vantage, which therefore afterwards I would read oftner than the other; setting always a mark at the name of each book, as they stand in the *Table* at the beginning of my Bible, when I had read that book over, that so I might know how often I had read each, lest I come too long to neglect the reading of any. This as to the *Order* of my *Reading*.

Having now my work thus orderly before me, it remains in the next place that I look to the best *manner* of doing it: whither belong the following rules.

First, that I endeavour to read with composedness of mind and attention, not onely to the sense, substance, or subject matter of what I read, but as to the very expressions of it. For that the very expressions of Scripture are not onely very useful in prayer (God loving to hear his children call upon him in his own language) but do also many times carry in them such secret emphases and force, as shall much

comfort

Part II. Chap. 4.

comfort, ſupport, awe, and otherwiſe affect the heart which conſiders them.

Secondly, that I be ſure, as I read, to obſerve the ſcope and drift of that portion of Scripture, which I read. For as to particular paſſages, it may ſo happen, that the plain Reader may many times ſcarce underſtand them, they puzling even learned heads: but as to the ſcope of the whole, as to that which the *Holy Ghoſt* chiefly drives at, this may be commonly more eaſily underſtood: and this being underſtood doth not only enſure me of ſo much benefit as I have underſtood of it, but will give ſpecial light unto thoſe darker places, whoſe meaning I do not ſo well conceive.

Thirdly, that if ever I intend this part of my devotion, to wit my *Reading*, ſhould be acceptable to God, or otherwiſe than a witneſs againſt myſelf, I reſolve upon the impartial practice of whatſoever I by reading find to be in Scripture com-

commanded, and eschewing of whatsoever I there find forbidden. Such godly purpose will encrease my very knowledge; *For the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will teach them his Statutes*: whereas others, who bring not a resolution of such conscientious practice, but barely inquisitive diligence, may come to be in a greater measure ignorant of his mind. Part. II. Chap. 5. Psal. 25. 14.

Chap. V.

Of Meditation, and the most edifying course in it.

THese rules being thus observed, and a certain portion of *Holy* Scripture thus read, it will be proper for me in the next place to proceed to *Meditation*.

Now *Meditation* here I take not for the simple thinking of any thing divine, which shall offer it self, but for

Part II. Chap. 5.

for an orderly and serious consideration of the particulars following.

1. Upon that portion of Scripture which I have read.

2. Upon my own state and ways.

3. Upon the prayers (that is, Confessions, Petitions and Thanksgivings) which I am presently to offer up unto God.

Touching the first there are these three things for me to consider.

First, If I have not, as I read, been able to understand the design and drift of the Holy Ghost in what I have read, let me consider touching that; and by a short review of it, comparing the parts or several materials spoken of, and attending how they hang together, endeavour to comprehend their substance and scope. He reads to no purpose who reads not thus; for it is not repeating the words of Scripture, but understanding & digesting their sense and substance, which is to be accounted reading the Scripture: and one Chapter thus read is worth ten hastily run over. Se

Secondly, If there be in what I have read any difficult or harder place, which ſeems to contain any matter of practice or article of faith (I mean which is likely to inſtruct me in any thing neceſſary to be believed or done in order to my ſalvation) that let me conſider, and endeavour thereof to find the meaning. As to thoſe difficulties, which concern controverſies, that is queſtionable Opinions in Divinity, or inquiries into matters of meer knowledge or ſpeculation, (ſuch things, which when they are known there is an end of them) theſe may be very well over-looked by an ordinary perſon. As for inſtance; Reading *Acts* 13. (the laſt Paragraph or partition of the Chapter, which begins *verſe* 44.) I find therein (*viz.* *verſe* 48.) a certain difficult expreſſion, *As many as were ordained unto life believed.* What *believing* and what *life* (i. e. heaven and bleſſedneſs) mean I know: but what *ordained* unto *life* means,

Part II. Chap. 5.

means, I doubt; and truly need not much trouble my self to enquire. Sufficient it is that I conclude from thence, that *all they who shall obtain everlasting life are believers* (nor one unbelieving or ungodly person shall ever enter into heaven) and therefore particularly that I resolve upon an honest cordial receiving of the Gospel, as my duty, if ever I intend for happiness. Again, reading *Exodus* 32. I find that *Moses took the Calfe they had made and burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder.* How the burning gold in the fire, which only purifies it ordinarily, should come to make it friable or brittle that it might be grownd unto powder, I need not stand to enquire. A shorter and better way it is, to believe the matter feasible, and the relation true, as being part of God's word: all I need to conclude thereupon is, that Idolatry is to be destroyed and that in such sort as the people may not return to it again, but rather loath and abominate it; as

do that which passeth through our bodies (for which reason *Moses* made the people to drink off the powder of the Calf:) and that it is the wisdome of Magistrates, whom it concerns, to destroy it, as it was *Moses's*, to find out and contrive such wayes or methods of destroying it. This is I say as much as can concern any ordinary person, and as for the curiosity touched it may safely be neglected. We give not rules to make a Divine, but to direct a Christian. Now all such difficulties and curiosities being left out, I presume the difficulties which arise in practicable matters will be but few. And for my help herein, it will be meet I reflect upon that which (according to the former rule) I found to be the scope or drift of that Scripture, and consider the difficulty with some relation or regard thereto, observing the occasion, upon which that expression came in. This will help me very much many times. But for my fur-

Part II. Chap. 5.

ther help therein, if I am able, it would be expedient I had some short gloſſe, or book explaining ſuch matters: and truly what book to pitch upon, as beſt in this caſe, is not eaſie to reſolve. For I ſuppoſe there are not many books of notes or Commentaries upon the whole Bible in Engliſh, which meddle only with neceſſary and practicable matters, omitting controverſals, which a private Chriſtian, to his better edification, may well ſpare. For the *New* Teſtament I much admire Dr. *Hammons* Paraphraſe, and could ten thouſand times wiſh ſuch a piece were extant upon the whole. But yet it is too difficult for every plain Reader. Biſhop *Hall* hath a Paraphraſe upon the whole Bible which comes much neerer to our preſent deſign: But I fear this is ſcarce. The frequenteſt, beſt, and innocenteſt that I know is *Diodati Annotations*: they have indeed a *Geneva tang* now and then, but pretty ſoberly. Some ſuch book ac-

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cording as I can get, I would furnish my self with, which I might consult touching the meaning of such difficult places as my Christian discretion should tell me to be practical, and for my necessary edification. Part II. Chap. 5.

Thirdly, Having thus found out the design of that whole portion of Scripture which I have read, and the meaning of such particular Texts as I shall have occasion to search into, let me in my meditations cast over again, or recollect the substance of it, and consider, what am I the better for the reading hereof?

1. Am I instructed or further confirmed in any matter of faith?

2. Am I taught any duty which before I either was ignorant of, or neglected? Do I here find any precept or command which I never before took notice of, or had forgot, &c?

3. Is there any thing which may quicken me to any duty, in which I am slack, or deter me from any sin

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to which I am prone? Any threatning of Gods wrath? Any example of his judgements? Any promise of mercy? Any instance of blessings on his diligent servants?

4. Is there any thing which may strengthen me in any temptation, comfort me in any affliction, distrust? &c.

5. Is there any particular emphatical or affectionate speech which may at any time quicken me? Any proper petition, confession, invocation, thanksgiving, or the like, which may be of use to me in prayer, or otherwise?

6. Is there any thing which I can observe of the experiences of holy men of old? any thing of the deceitfulness of sin? &c.

Through such heads as these may my meditations briefly run: which heads till I am perfect in, it may not be amiss to open this my book and examine what I have read, according to these directions laid down. And if I am able, I shall find it

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incredible benefit, in the end of these my meditations to use my pen, whensoever by any reading I have gained any more remarkable benefit, and to register in one of my paper books (reserved ever for this purpose, which for distinctions sake I may know by the name of my *Memorial*) that particular which I have gained: in which I need to observe no other method, but only to write all the notes which I take out of any one book, as of *Matthew, Mark, &c.* together, that so at my second or third reading that particular book over, I may see, what the second or third reading of it advantaged me more than the first. And these notes thus taken, because intended as helps to my memory, I must be sure to find time within a convenient season to review. This is a profitable course for me to observe in my ordinary meditations upon the holy Scriptures. Part II. Chap. 5.

The next thing which my meditations are to be imployed upon, is

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upon my particular *State* and *Ways*, which I am in ſome meaſure to take notice of, as well that I may be more circumſpect in ſuch particulars, wherein I ſhall find greater need of circumſpection, as that I may be able to addreſs my ſelf to God in a way ſuitable to my condition. For *my condition varying, my prayers ought to vary accordingly.*

Firſt then, As to my *Ways*, that is Thoughts, Words and Deeds; (for all theſe the Scripture compriſeth under that one term of our *Ways.*) Theſe all know to be either good or bad. And as to both, I am to look both backward and forward.

1. I am to look back and conſider with my ſelf what new temptations have befaln me, how far my heart hath cloſed with them and been overcome by them (1) As to matters of *Commiſſion*, whether of inward ſins, ſuch which are acted in the mind (as evil Thoughts, Deſires, Reſolutions, or Deſigns) or of outward and bodily acting; as Words

Words and Deeds. Hath not my discourse been Untrue, Unsavory, Haughty, Passionate, or the like? my actions Ungodly, Dishoneſt, Uncharitable, contrary to Sobriety? And (2) as to *Omiſſion*. Have I left nothing undone which I was to have done, which I had reſolved to do, and had opportunity for? All this, as far as preſent convenience will admit, being duely conſidered, ſeriouſly to be laid open before God in my following Prayers, both as to confeſſion thereof, and ſupplication for pardon and future grace againſt ſuch miſcarriages. Part II. Chap. 5.

In like manner if in review of my late ways I find through Grace, my Soul to have been conſiderably taken up with good thoughts, deſires, or ſtudies, my diſcourſe to have brought Glory to God, or edification and quickening to my ſelf or others; my actions commendable and ſuch, which through Chriſt I hope are acceptable to God; I am to bleſs God for his preventing and

Part II. Chap. 5. assisting grace, acknowledging with St *Paul* the whole, even mine own labours and industry to have flown from that Fountain. *By the grace of God*, saith he, *I am what I am. I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I but the grace of God which is in me.*

1 Cor. 15. 10.

2. Forward too I am to look (especially in my morning meditation, *&c.* before such times in which any more considerable work or imployment awaits me,) and consider (1) what opportunities I may have of doing service to God, or good to man, (2) what temptations to any sin my approaching business or company probably will bring with it, and not onely in my resolutions to prepare and arm my self accordingly for the imbraceing, and with my utmost might doing my duty, and withstanding the sin; but also in my prayers suitably implore Divine strength and aid.

Many such thoughts as these a serious Christian who useth to imploy tim-

time to his best advantage, will entertain while he is putting on his clothes in the morning, or outwardly taken up in any like necessary acts. This as to meditation upon my ways. Part II. Chap. 5.

Secondly, As to my present *Inward state*, the temper of my mind: Let me examine that; whether I find any relentings or meltings of heart for those my wandrings, which I have before viewed, any firmness and resolution for the future against the like: Accordingly I am to apply my self to God in prayer, either for the giving me a due sense of, and remorse for, and resolution and watchfulness against my sin, or for the heightning and strengthning those degrees hereof, which I already have.

Thirdly as to my *Outward state*; Let me consider, how Gods holy providence hath either favoured or crossed my ordinary affairs and designs: for accordingly still I am to address my self unto God in prayer; either

Part II. Chap. 5.

either by praising him for my successes, or bewailing those sins and omissions which I may judge have blasted them, or otherwise, as my Christian discretion shall suggest

All which heads of self-examination and Meditation, if, because lying here at some distance, I cannot always readily in my memory run through without confusion or omission, it may be expedient to have them summ'd up into short questions, which I may turn to daily upon occasion, and put each to my soul to be answered unto upon enquiry made.

1. *What sin committed by* { Thought? Word? Deed?

2. *What duty omitted as to* { Thought? Word? Deed?

3. *What grace acted in* { Thought? Word? Deed?

4. *How*

4. *How hath God dealt with me in his providences, and what in me occasioning such dealings?* Part II. Chap. 5.
5. *What temper of mind am I now in, considering mine own late carriage, and Gods providences towards me?*
6. *What temptations to sin* } am I this day likely to meet with?
7. *What opportunities of virtue* }

The last head upon which my meditations are to be imployed, is my *Prayers*, which I am now about to offer up unto God: in which, if I use a set form, I am to consider where those new particulars of confession, petition or praises must come in, after what sort they may be, conveniently expressed, & sometimes (when my condition requires and my time will permit me to be more large or earnest in any part of prayer) with what arguments I may strengthen my faith, and plead with God touching what I desire to speed

Part II. Chap. 5.

ſpeed for; or again with what circumſtances of my ſins, or Gods mercies I may heighten my repentance for my ſins, or thankfulneſs for thoſe mercies. If I do not uſe my ſelf to a ſet form, then will it be neceſſary that I more deliberately meditate what I intend to confeſs, to ask, to praiſe God for, how I ſhall ſo call upon him or conceive of him, as may ſuit with thoſe main and principal addreſſes, which I am to make to him. Whether every particular expreſſion, or the juſt words be forethought, it haply matters not very much: but that ſome fit ſignificant proper and quickning expreſſions, for the ſeveral parts and ſubſtancials of my prayer, be prepared, it is expedient, as well for the greater readineſs of the ſoul in prayer, which when it is much to ſeek in this caſe, cannot do its duty with attention, nor without diſturbance and intermiſſion of due affection, as alſo that nothing unworthy of the nature of prayer, and the worſhip

Worſhip of God may be offered up unto him. And in this point it may be ſingularly helpful to conſider, what of thoſe expreſſions, promiſes, narratives, experiences, *&c.* which I have at any time read in the Word of God, may be uſeful to me in thoſe my intended addreſſes to the Throne of Grace. God (as already intimated) loves to hear his own language from us; and ſo it is, that the very expreſſions of Scripture have a marvellous affecting power upon the devout heart, beyond thoſe, which ſeem not to have been alike ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt uſing them.

Chap. VI.

Of Prayer, and firſt of its ſubſtance and parts.

WHat I have *read* being thus digeſted by *Meditation*, and by the like meditation, preparation being

Part II. Chap. 6. being made for *Prayer*, that now remains as the third and moſt compleat act of my daily devotion: touching which, beſides the precepts already given, others yet remain to be given, when the conſideration of the nature of the duty hath a little made way for them.

Now *Prayer is the ſeeking unto God, and before him repreſenting our Eſtates and Deſires,*

The general nature of prayer is a betaking or addreſſing our ſelves to God: and therefore its firſt act is *Invocation* or calling upon him. Now our condition, who are *duſt* and *aſhes*, and his Majeſty being conſidered, we cannot well be eſteemed to ſeek unto him without adoration or worſhipping of him in the beginning of theſe our addreſſes; for that in all ſeeking to Superiours we ever begin with ſome acknowledgements of their being above us, able to help us, *&c.* upon which accounts we uſe ordinarily ſome teſtimonies of reverence towards

wards them: But God being infinitely above us, the self-existent and Almighty Fountain of our being, and the most gracious Author and bestower of all comforts, upon whom we daily live, the reverence which we bear and express to him ought to be advanced to the highest pitch possible. Now the acting and giving the greatest reverence and honour that we can with soul and body, do I call *Adoration*. If we therefore put both these together, we have the first part of *Prayer*, to wit, *An invocatory adoration of God*, that is, *an humble calling upon him*, accompanied with *worshipping and adoring his infinite Majesty*. And this in most compleat prayers extant in Scripture we may observe: particularly in that for ever to be reverenced pattern, our Lords Prayer, the first sentence contains what we speak of. [*Our Father*: this is a calling upon God. *Which art in Heaven*; these are words befitting one who adores his Majesty.] So in

Part II. Chap. 6. in that prayer of *Hezekiah*, *Isaiah* xxxvii. 16. *O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims; thou art God, even thou alone*, &c. How evidently doth this beginning of his prayer carry in it an Invocation (or calling upon) God, accompanied with the acknowledgement and adoration of his Deity.

The first part of prayer we gathered out of those words (expressing its general nature) it is a *seeking unto God*. The second we may gather out of them, which follow, *it is a representing our estate before him*. Our *estates* naturally are *sinful* and *miserable*. So far forth as we retain any thing of our old nature, so far are sin and misery inseparable adjuncts or attendants unto us. The representing therefore our estates before God, is the *confessing our sins*, and *laying open our grievances and wants* before him. A second part of prayer then is *Confession*.

That which all *sinners* should desire

ſire is *pardon*: that which all *miſerable* perſons do naturally deſire is *help*. The repreſenting then our deſires before God is the *begging mercy and grace to help in time of need*; that is,

1. Pardon of ſin.
2. Deliverance from our miſery.
   Internal, by the ſanctification of our hearts,
   External, by meet ſupplies of our outward wants.

A third act of prayer therefore is, *Petition or Asking*.

Somewhat more yet is conſiderable in *our ſtates* here below, which though naturally miſerable, as aforeſaid, yet are by the manifold Grace of God made in ſeveral reſpects *more comfortable*, *by reaſon* of variety of *bleſſings*. Now he that receives a *benefit* ought to have at the leaſt a will and deſire of *thankfulneſs*. He therefore who duly repreſents his ſtate and deſires unto God, layes open alſo before him thoſe ſeveral

Part II. Chap. 6.

veral mercies which at his hands he receives, humbly blessing and praising him the Author of them. The last part of prayer then is *Thanksgiving*.

Now because all these may be done either for our selves or others, therefore is prayer double, or of two sorts.

That which meerly respects our selves.

That which we offer up for others, called *Intercession*.

From all this it is evident, that *the first thing, which he, who would learn to pray, must take care of, is, that he throughly know himself*, that is, (1.) Be acquainted with his own state, with his sins, his miseries and wants, inward and outward; otherwise he can never duly represent them unto God. (2.) That he well know his own desires and resolutions, least he play the hypocrite with God, *asking* what he *desireth not*, or *vowing* what he *intends not*. These are the substantials of prayer.

Chap.

Chap. VII.

Of the right manner of prayer. First, of its inward manner. Some considerations to quicken to sincerity and heartiness in Prayer. What graces are to be exercised in each part of Prayer.

THe manner of the performing every duty is much looked upon by God. Now prayer being such an immediate act of worship, and it being most just, reasonable, and necessary that we should worship God with the whole man, that is, both with soul and body, in the *manner of prayer* there can be only considerable, its Inward and Outward part.

The *inward* manner of prayer is unquestionably most respected by God:

Part. II. Chap. 7. God: for that according hereunto is the prayer, and the man, sincere or otherwise. And the Consideration hereof should incite us chiefly to care herein. I may pray in as good and as many words, in as devout postures, and, in a word, after as pious a sort, as to what there is outward in prayer, as ever man did, and yet be hypocritical in my prayers. But it is impossible, that I should pray with my *Soul and all that is within me*, and not be cordial, honest and sincere in those prayers which I so make. And therefore as God doth, so, I say, every Christian ought to look chiefly to the inward disposition of his soul in his *Devotions*.

We may note further for our quickening herein, that God not onely *requireth* the heart in prayer, but *hath accepted* and often *doth accept* the inward breathings of it, and answer them as fully, as if all other circumstances belonging to the outward manner of prayer had been observed.

observed. As in the case of *Hannah*, who in that so successful and effectual prayer of hers *spake in her heart onely*. 1 Sam. 1. 13.

Now prayer is then right as to its inward manner, when there is an hearty exercise of Christian graces and affections suitable to the substance of the prayer, which we offer up to God, (That is to say, to go through the parts of prayer.) *I adore and call upon God as I ought*, when in my calling upon him, I really *believe* that he is, and that he is such that he hath revealed himself to be, and as I now express or conceive him, and therefore *with reverence humbly submit* my self before his Majesty. It is a piece of holy skill worthy taking notice of, which is observeable in the prayers of holy men in Scripture. They usually so frame their invocations or callings upon God, as may suit with their main business at the throne of grace and strengthen their faith for those particular mercies which they ask.

Thus

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Thus in that forenamed prayer of *Hezechias's* against the *Assyrian* Armies. *O Lord of hosts* [for he prayed against a mighty host, and for deliverance from it.] *God of Israel* [he therefore so calls God, to put him in mind of his covenant with *Israel*, that he might stretch forth his hand for the deliverance of his own people] *who dwellest between the Cherubims* [that is, who hast here recorded thy name and promised to meet and bless, and *from thy mercy seat* to answer, thy people. He therefore makes mention of Gods promised presence, or *dwelling* between the Cherubims that he might prevail with God to save that City, where his Temple and this his mercy-Seat was placed. Every expression in this his invocation hath somewhat in it proper to his suit, and of force to strengthen his faith and dependance upon God that he might the more surely prevail. In short then the graces to be exercised *in adoration* or *calling*

upon *God* chiefly are, *Faith*, *Fear*, or *Reverence* of God, and *Humility*.

I then *confess* my self to God as I ought when with *hearty sorrow* and *repentance* (which if earnest will be accompanied with a kind of *indignation* against my self) I lay open impartially my sins before him, not sparing the sweetest or closest: and with an *humble sense* of my own vileness, impotency and emptiness acknowledge my wants or his just judgements upon me for any of my sins. So that the chief grace to be exercised peculiarly in confession is *repentance* or *Godly sorrow*, an humble and tender sense of what we confess, accompanied with *shame* of our selves.

Further, then I *aske* as I ought when, a sensible of mine own unworthiness, out of an *humble trust* in God, through the merits of his Son, (which trust his gracious promises and declarations of good will through him, by me ever had respect to, do encourage me to take up)

I heartily desire what I aske at his hands: or at least am heartily sorry, if I cannot say I heartily desire all I ask. Now because while I am asking, it so cometh to pass, that I often intermix somewhat of vow as in asking the pardon of some p sins, many times I engage to di gent and watchful opposition i the future against them, therefo is it necessary that, if I would a aright, I ask with *resolution* o *purpose of endeavouring* them. And further for that I cannot ex forgiveness from God, except forgive from my heart my breth therefore I must aske in *charity* then the graces chiefly to be ex cised in Petition are, First, *Fai* an humble trust and hope in through *Jesus Christ* that I speed (which is most truly *in his name.*) Secondly, *Love* God and holiness. Thirdly, a fast *purpose of obedience*, which most considerable part of tance. Fourthly, *Charity* to my Brethren.

Lastly, I then *praise* or give God thanks for his mercies as I ought, when I have an *inward acknowledgement* and *sense* that it is from him alone, and through his meer favour, that I enjoy these mercies, and when, not onely I my self do *admire*, but desire that heaven and earth may admire him for his goodness: when also I do all this with a *resolution of improving* the mercy given, that is, of walking as it becometh one, who hath been vouchsafed of such a blessing. So that the graces to be exercised in thanksgiving chiefly are, 1. *Humility*, or a sense of our own unworthiness, and of Gods free mercy and grace, the onely fountain of all received or hoped for benefits. 2. *Love*, or an admiration of his goodness accompanied with a desire that he may receive all possible glory for it. 3. *Resolution* and *study* of greater and more suitable *obedience* and duty to him:

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These are those graces, in the

Part II. Chap. 8.

exercise of which, the due inward manner of prayer, or a *praying temper*, consists: a composition so amiable, as that it will ever where it is send up an odour of a sweet savour unto Heaven, and delight, shall say, or overcome, the Almighty Majesty.

Chap. VIII.

Of the best outward manner of Prayer, in fit posture and fit words. Of praying by gift, and the inconveniences alledgeable against it. Of praying by a form, and the inconveniences alledgeable against it. An accommodation and reconcilement of both.

IN the *outward manner* of pra- the chief points considerable in

the use of fit *postures*, and meet *words*.

Now though the posture of the body seem to be a small matter, yet me thinks my prayers want their due solemnity, if not performed in a posture of worship. True it is, many a devout prayer a man may make riding upon his horse back, walking in the fields, and the like: and right Christian is it thus to sanctifie my necessary journeys, or the time which otherwise would be wholly lost in travel, or stoln away by such recreatory obambulation. But these are occasional, and not my set and solemn devotions. Here my body being otherwise necessarily imployed, the most which I can give to God is my soul: or if to my thoughts my words be added, it is as much as well can be. But in my fit course of devotion, it is not to be supposed that I worship God (*aliud agens*) imployed with any thing but his worship: and therefore herein let my body, as well as

Part II. Chap. 8.

my soul, be taken up in meet acts of worship. Now that I account to be the best posture of worship, which best expresseth an inward reverence of that Majesty, to whom I addres my self, who having *fearfully* mad my body, and to this day *wonderfully* upheld and *preserved* it, and (which is infinitely more) *redeemed* even my very body to immortality by the body and blood of his Son hath obliged it, as well as my soul, to all possible homage. And it is to be observed that St. *Paul* seems to speak (chiefly if not only) of pri vate and his daily devotion, when he saith, *I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. What was his therefore, let it be my practice, as often as I thus pray, to bow my knees: and (if to no other end, but that I may be sure to mind that they be holy and *without wrath* let me add the *lifting up of hands*. Other postures may be sometimes necessary in our solemn humiliations, or more earnest deprecations

Ephes. 3. 14.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

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any imminent evil, such as is *Prostration*, or casting my self on the earth before God: to which pious discretion will easily in their season direct. Part II. Chap. 8.

As to matter of *words* or the forms of prayer, this age hath seen more controversie, and that in *England* alone, than all ages from the beginning of the world have known all the world over. Touching which matter I say onely, that the nature of prayer being, as beforesaid, a *seeking unto God by way of adoration, confession, petition, and praise*, if we do this with honest hearts and suitable affections, whether the words in which we utter our selves, be our own or anothers; whether they be forethought or sudden, (provided they fitly and reverently express the inward sense of our hearts) it mattereth not, nor is it at all essential unto *Prayer*. For the full essence of prayer is complete, such an address being made inwardly by my soul, and outward-

Part II. Chap. 8.

ly thus expreſſed by my tongue and body: and be the words whoſe they will, my praying them (that is, offering them up to God) with an heart ſuitable to them, hath made them as much mine, as if I had invented, contrived, dictated or pend them at the firſt. I think therefore, if men would be ſober and peaceably minded, this need not make either a ſtirre in the World, or move any ſcruple to a Chriſtians conſcience.

I profeſs my ſelf no whit guilty of undervaluing the free effuſions of the ſoul before God (in private eſpecially) in ſuch expreſſions as the affected and moved mind ſuggeſts, or as the ſpirit gives utterance. But in my daily private devotions to uſe perpetually ſuch a looſe and arbitrary way, I think hath theſe inconveniencies. Firſt, that (by reaſon ſometimes of the coldneſs, dulneſs, and heedleſneſs of my heart; other times by reaſon of diſtractions, incumbrances, and the like almoſt unavoidable

avoidable mischiefs) my devotions will be too often slightly slubberd over, perfunctorily and disorderly performed: Whereas had I a mature and well composed prayer before me; which I use wholly to offer up to God, all would be much more substantial: and though haply my heart may have been in these my prayers too too dead (as it was likely perhaps to have been, had I prayed otherwise, for such or such a season) yet shall I not prove guilty of such idleness, negligence, and slightinesse, as otherwise I should have been. And such infirmities, which are incident to us by reason of our present frailty and state, God is likely the more easily to pity and pass by, when he sees that, though we are more indispos'd than ordinary, yet are we no whit less diligent. Secondly, another inconvenience thereby may oftentimes be, The omission of many things necessary to be confessed, asked, or returned thanks for; not so much through

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through negligence, dulneſs, &c. (as before,) as incogitancy and unavoidable forgetfulneſs. Our ordinary wants and ſpiritual concerns we may come not to mind, either at all, or as we ought, through much being intent on ſome other preſſing (outward) evils. Common experience will eaſily ſatisfie a Chriſtian herein, who is but verſed in the practice of what we ſpeak of. Have I not many times kneeled down before God with an intention to ask ſuch things which by reaſon of my earneſt asking ſomewhat elſe, I have forgotten to ask before I aroſe? and hath not the reaſon been the meer following extemporary ſuggeſtion? Let it be conſidered.

Again, on the other ſide, to use always a certain and conſtant form of words, ſeems to have theſe inconveniences. Firſt, that we having almoſt daily new ſins to confeſs, new wants to beg a ſupply of; theſe by ſuch courſe ſhall be omitted, or only lightly

lightly and generally toucht, at leaſt not ſo particularly and affectionately preſſed and inſiſted upon as they ought. 2. Beſides ſometimes haply I would ſpend more time in prayer than at another time: Now if my prayers be always the ſame, I cannot, *except* (as Papiſts are reported to do their *Credoe's* and *Ave Maries*) I ſhould run over and over the ſame again. 3. Further, frequent uſe may breed dulneſs, as ſome may think. Part II. Chap. 8.

Theſe being the inconveniencies of both caſes, and each caſe beſides having advocates (or perſons that love and plead for them) even amongſt the common people, it will be beſt to move for an *Accommodation*: And that may be on this wiſe,

The inconveniences of the former caſe may be avoided, by the having a certain good plain and full form of prayer, which we well underſtand, and by uſually tying our ſelves hereto: not ſo as, 1. to think our

Part II. Chap. 8.

our work is done by the prayer being said; for that were to neglect the most necessary part in the manner of prayer, contrary to former rule: nor so, 2. as not to alter for this or that time, any expression as God may move our hearts in prayer, or insert any new thing as we have need: but only so, 1. as to ensure my self that my devotions and prayers be sound and compleat, that I offer not to God the *halt and the lame*: & so, 2. as to keep my mind fixt and constant to its business, intent upon all its spiritual concerns.

And again, the inconveniences of the later case will be avoided hereby, that we have not supposed the form upon occasion altogether unalterable, as abovesaid, but rather to have its fit and proper places, wherein we may insert or put in the *confession* of new sins, with their proper aggravations, as also fit places for the adding of any new matter of *Petition* or *Thanksgiving*,

as

as there ſhall be occaſion. And to the laſt inconvenience of this ſecond caſe, it may be ſaid, that Uſe cannot beget dulneſs, if the prayer thus ſuppoſed to be framed, be uſed, according to former precepts, with *Reading* and *Meditation* before it, which exerciſes will have in a good meaſure quickened the heart for prayer. And as for ſuch more ſolemn ſeaſons, when we would ſpend more time with God in prayer, we need not ſo to tie our ſelves to theſe our ordinary devotions; thoſe which at ſuch ſeaſons we intend being already ſuppoſed more than ordinary. We may be larger in the confeſſion of ſin, more particular in its aggravation, more earneſt for ſuch and ſuch mercies as we want, &c. according as we ſhall ſee occaſion: and either uſe the groundwork and ſubſtance of thoſe our uſual prayers, with ſuch amplifications as we ſhall judge meeteſt, or for that time, inſtead of them, uſe ſuch other prayers as we ſhall find beſt

Part II. Chap. best to suit with our temper and occasions; for the preparation of which prayers directions will hereafter be given.

In the mean time for better understanding and comprehending the precepts given, as also for the supply of such who may haply be scarce able to frame to themselves such a form, it may not be amiss to subjoyn one for morning, and another for evening, framed according to the former rules.

Chap. IX.

A Form of Prayer made according to the former accommodation, which may be used in our morning Privacy.

THe Christian then having read and meditated as before directed,

fted, let him reverently kneel down, lifting up his hands and eyes, but most surely his heart to Heaven, and say,

O Almighty and most blessed God, Lord of heaven and earth, who makest the out-goings both of morning and evening, and by whose good hand upon me thy creature, I am awaked out of my last nights sleep, and being risen, here present my self before thee: I humbly bow to thee my knees, and therewith my heart and soul, and desire with all that is within me to adore thy blessed Majesty.

Invocation, and Adoration.

But most unworthy, and of my self most unsufficient, am I to perform unto thee any wor-

Confession.
1. Of Habitual sins.

Part II. Chap. 2

worſhip or ſervice. What is duſt and aſhes, (and ſuch am I if I were innocent) to take upon it to ſpeak unto the Lord! But I, O God, am a guilty wretch, one whom it becometh to ſtand afar off, and ſhame covering my face, to cry *Vnclean, Vnclean.* My ſoul is naturally over-run with luſts as with an univerſal Leproſie: there is no free part of me; my life is as univerſally corrupt as mine heart. My childhood and youth have not only been vanity, but ſin: I have done nothing elſe therein but fulfilled the deſires of my fleſh and mind. My corruptions have only grown with me: and my ſins ſince become ſo much the more ſinful, by how much the more knowledge I have

have had of thy will, and strength and engagements to have performed it.

2 *Of actual sins.*

To this very day, as indeed I ever have done, I daily break thy holy Laws in thought, word and actions, by chooſing what thou haſt forbidden, and neglecting what thou haſt commanded. * * *. In all my wayes I moſt miſerably tranſgreſs. My very † ſleep it ſelf, O Lord, is not innocent. Nor is it thus only in the common and more ordinary actions of my life. Thoſe few good deeds which I do, have many, not only † infirmities, but ſins in them:

* *Here confeſs any particular or freſh ſin committed, or duty neglected, which in thy examination of thy ſelf thou haſt found.*

† *Remember in the uſe of theſe or any ſuch words to reflect in thy thoughts upon any particulars which thy conſcience tells thee, they may fitly repreſent to God touching thee.*

Part II. Chap. 9.

them: and I have need to repent of my very righteousness [of my † * * *.] I therefore so desire to do: and am here come before thee, as thou hast commanded me, to confess my sin unto thee, with hopes, according to thy promise, that I shall find mercy. I have, O God, confessed to thee, as I am able.

Petition. 1 For ourselves.

Now Mercy, Mercy, let me find with thee, through Christ Jesus my Saviour. Remember that attonement, which he made by the bloud of his Cross: In those streames throughly wash away my filth: By those Wounds let me be healed; and by his Death let me attain a blessed immortality, [* *] And send down thine holy

** Particularly let me obtaine the pardon of **

holy Spirit abundantly into mine heart, which may renew me throughout according to thine Image, healing all the naughty inclinations of my soul, and begetting in me an hearty love unto holiness, and a constant fear of thee my God, that I may have respect unto all thy Commandments, and walk before thee all my daies with a perfect heart. Quicken me also by the same thy good Spirit, to give all diligence in every duty [*and especially in* * *] that I may grow in grace, and in thy favour, and daily come nearer unto salvation and thee. And forasmuch as I my self am unstable as water, preserve me by thy power through Faith, that I fall not from my integrity,

Part. II. Chap. 9.

ty, nor depart wickedly from thee my God. Especially keep thy servant from his iniquity, [*or his iniquities of* * * *] and make me most watchful against all those * occasions and wiles of sin, by which I have been formerly insnared. My outward condition, during all the daies of my pilgrimage here on earth, do thou order to thy glory and my own good: and, if it may be thy holy Will, grant that it may be so far quiet and prosperous, as that I may serve thee chearfully and without distraction.

* *Here thou maist have many private and proper reflexions: and so generally wheresoever the same mark is set.*

2. *For others.*

Be gracious also, O Lord, unto thine holy Church, and to this Church especially,

Watch

Watch over us daily for good: and be pleased to bless and preserve the Kings Majesty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Grant that all Magistrates may be faithful both to thee, and to their Prince and Country in their trust: and that all Ministers, of what degree soever, may be sober, watchful, fervent and successful in thy work. Let the whole Nation, and especially this neighbourhood grow in the true knowledge and fear of thee. Visit with thy grace and blessing all my † Relations, my † Friends and † Benefactors. Forgive and reconcile both to thy self and me all mine † enemies. Comfort, relieve, and in thine own good time deliver all thy servants

† who

Part. II. Chap. 9.

† who are in any distress inward or outward, and sanctifie both to them and me all thy dealings, causing all things in the end to work together for good, according to thine infinite Power and Wisdome, whereby thou over-rulest all events.

Thanksgiving.

For which thy gracious administration of the whole course of nature, and the multitude of blessings appertaining both to this life and that which is to come, which thy providence incessantly heaps upon all mankind, and particularly upon me thy most undeserving servant, for ever blessed be thy holy Name. Especially may Heaven and Earth ever praise thee, for the redemption of the world by thy

thy Son; and the knowledge of thee, through him, revealed in thy Word; and the mighty workings of thy Spirit thereby. And be thou pleased to accept of that praise which thy servant hereby returns thee (as great as he can) for them all; and particularly, for this last nights refreshings, together with the comfortable restoring him to the enjoyment of day. Grant me thy special Grace, that I may spend my time to thy Glory, and may be all the day long in thy fear. Keep me that I fall into no sin, nor run into any danger. And accept thou this my morning service, and together me, who here devote my self to thee, through my Saviour Christ Jesus, in whose

Petitionary conclusion.

Name

Part II. Chap. 10.

Name I further pray, as by him taught, when I pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

Chap. X.

A form of Prayer, made as the other, which may be used in our evening Privacy.

IN like manner the Christian having entred his *Closet* with some such ejaculatory or short prayer, as before directed to, and having *read* and *meditated* as in the morning, may, I presume, very profitably, use with such alteration, as his condition shall require, and his discretion direct, the ensuing Prayer.

Invocation and Adoration.

O Most Holy and Gracious Father, the searcher of

of all hearts, who seest my down-lying as well as up-rising, darkness and light being both alike to thee, who art near unto all my ways, and espiest my thoughts while they are yet afar off. I have here set my self before thee to pay my evening homage, and desire to present both my soul and body (as is most due) a living Sacrifice to thee my God, who hast made and redeemed both.

Confession 1. Of habitual corruption.

But most unfit, O Lord, are they to be to thee presented, every part of both being naturally corrupt and abominable, and nothing in me free from the loathsom defilement of sin. My soul is desperately wicked, and all its powers perverse and bent upon evil:

Part II. Chap. 10.

My mind alienated from thee through the ignorance that is within me: My affections unruly and masterless: My will full of enmity to thy Law, and enslaved to the service of divers lusts and pleasures. And as to my body, in iniquity, O Lord, was I shapen, and in sin did my Mother conceive me.

2. Of actual sin.

And ever since, have all my members been servants unto iniquity and instruments of wickedness. With my whole man have I obeyed the law of sin, and fulfilled the desires of my flesh and corrupt mind. I scarce can think of that sin, to which I have not had my hands one part of my time or other. In sin, O God, have I spent not onely my vainer age, and the days of my ignorance

but my ripeſt years, and thoſe of fulleſt diſcretion, which I have yet attain'd to: Since the light of thy Goſpel hath ſhone into my opened eyes, ſince thou haſt touched my heart with a ſenſe of that evil, which there is in ſin, ſo wicked and perverſe a ſervant have I been, that knowing my Lords will I have both neglected to do accordingly, and preſumptuouſly done contrary unto it. To the very preſent time, O Lord, how † frequently, and how † ſadly do I backſlide? What † liberty do I allow my ſelf? How † heedleſly do I converſe? I walk at a meer peradventure with thee my God. Notwithſtanding all my vows and promiſes of watchfulneſs unto obedience, this very day

Part. II. Chap. 10.

Part II. Chap. 10.

how little hath thy fear been in my heart! and from hence comes it to pass that I have so miserably departed from thee [by * * *. With what stripes therefore do I deserve to be beaten! And, how righteous a quarrel against me hath not onely the Justice, but thy very Grace and Mercy!

* *Here confess any of the miscarriages of the day, which thou hast been supposed to have taken notice of in thy meditation.*

Petition. 1. *For our selves*

Notwithstanding, O Blessed Father, give thy poor creature leave to beseech, and let him prevail with thee, not to take that advantage against him which justly thou mayest. Rather, now thou hast borne so long, break my heart by the thy goodness, and make thy forbearance and long-suffering

ing to lead me to repentance. Vouchsafe unto me thy sanctifying Spirit: Let it fill me with an holy shame of my former ways: And let the sense of my own unworthiness towards thee beget in me an holy indignation against my self, a passionate and constant zeal by future diligence, as far as is possible to redeem and repair some of my lost and most sadly mis-spent time. Let my heart be never void of a stedfast purpose of serving thee in the impartial performance of every known duty, [especially of [* * *] and careful avoidance of every sin [*]. And having thus given to will, do thou of the same thy good plea-

* *Here put in any thing for which thou findest occasion.*

Part II. Chap. 10.

ſure give alſo to do, following the preventions of thy Grace by the continual aſſiſtances thereof, ſo that I may proceed from one virtue unto another, perfecting holineſs in thy fear, and keeping a conſcience void of offence towards thee and all men.

And this my cordial purpoſe, and perſeverance in endeavours of pleaſing thee, do thou through the bloud of my Saviour graciouſly accept, laying not to my charge any of my former ſins, nor viſiting upon me, either the neglects, or tranſgreſſions of my duty. At leaſt however thou ſhalt here deal with thy ſervant, in the laſt day acquit him of all guilt, and, through the merits of thy Son, let him obtain remiſſion

mission of his sin, and an inheritance in thine everlasting Kingdom. In the mean while, as to the necessaries of this present life, give thy servant what thou pleasest, and what thou seest best for him, even food convenient. Thou needest not, O God, my service, but accept my ambition of being serviceable unto thee, and bless me both with strength and opportunities for it, and, if it may be thy holy will, with success therein.

2. For others.

Father, I pray unto thee also for all men (forasmuch as thou art a God who wouldest have all to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of thy truth) especially for all and every member and members of thy Universal Church,

Part II. Chap. 10.

and for the particular Church of this the Land of my nativity: For the Kings Majesty, the Queen and the whole Royal Family, for all that are in authority, for the several Stewards of thy Mysteries the Ministers of thy Gospel [for him in particular to whose oversight thou hast committed me] that thou wilt give unto them all, according to thy most gracious pleasure, the blessings both of this life and that which is to come, especially such measures of thy Spirit, that every shoulder may be fitted for its burden, and all amongst us may faithfully serve thee, according to their several degrees; so that this whole Land may be blessed with abundance of prosperity and peace,

peace, ſo long as the Sun and Moon endureth. Forget not peculiarly to ſhew mercy unto the relations, friends, helpers and well-wiſhers of thy ſervant: Reward, I beſeech thee, all their love; and forgive, good Lord, divert, and put an end unto all others malice or enmity. Let thine eyes be ever open upon, and the bowels of thy compaſſion be moved towards, all thy wanting and ſuffering ſervants: Support them under, and graciouſly deliver them out of all their diſtreſſes, and let the end be peace, and righteouſneſs, and bleſſedneſs for ever.

Thankſgiving.

Thy ſervant will ſpeak yet once more, and praiſe thee for thine infinite love and compaſſion to that miſerable nature,

Part II. Chap. 10.

ture, of which he is a partaker, in revealing to us, when we had all loſt or corrupted it, the knowledge of thy ſelf, both by the light of Nature, and moſt clearly by thy holy Word; in ſending thy Son for our redemption, in appointing the Miniſtry and Ordinances of thy Goſpel, and pouring out thy holy Spirit, to turn us from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto the kingdom of thy Son. O God, I particularly bleſs thee, for the knowledge which I have of thee in my Saviour Chriſt Jeſus; for my ſhare in him; for any meaſure of thy Grace on me vouchſafed; for the comfortable hope which through thy Sons bloud I have of pardon and eternal life; for

this

this days life and protection, for the with-holding, [or removing] those several judgements which my sins deserve, [***] for the loading me with a multitude of most undeserved blessings [especially for ***] Encrease upon me thy Grace evermore; and make me thankful by proving a faithful Steward of all thy mercies. Let that Eye of thine which never slumbreth nor sleepeth, which hath been open upon me this day, watch over me this night: Let nothing disturb or make me afraid. Let none of the sins of the day lye down with me, nor ever appear against me. Vouchsafe my body due refresh-

* *Here praise God for any particular deliverance, saying,* [*especially for* **]

Petitionary conclusion,

Part. II. Chap. 11.

freſhment, and let my ſoul have her ſongs in the night. Keep both from all works of darkneſs: and let me be ever with thee, O Father, both here and hereafter, through thy Son my Saviour Chriſt Jeſus, in whoſe name and words I further pray,

Our Father, &c.

Chap. XI.

Some further Directions touching the uſe of theſe Prayers. Objections of want of time, or want of privacy conſidered.

IN theſe or the like words may a devout Chriſtian, I preſume, not unfitly pour out his heart before God, morning and evening. But it is to be remembred to what end theſe

these forms were prepared, and the use of them directed to, to wit, to be a provision against raw, heedless, imperfect, broken, confused, and disorderly Prayers, of which dulness, distemper, or distraction may make even the devoutest Christian to be guilty, if he always trust to his extemporary faculty and readiness.

Wherefore it is not the intention of the present direction, to tye even every one that shall use these or the like forms ever to them, but onely commonly, or as his Christian prudence and sobriety shall judge it best suiting with his devotion and present temper. So then, if at any time a Christian shall find his mind more ready and present than ordinary, so that he can say in Holy *David's* words, *My heart is fixed*, [or, prepared] *O Lord, my heart is fixed* and he feel a certain overflowing of affection ready to come over his soul, he is to esteem this a time, when God doth as it were bespeak somewhat more than ordinary?

Psal 108.

Part II. Chap. II.

nary; to that purpose offering, and giving him to feel already, more than ordinary assistance, and by such special moving of the waters secretly signifie, that he hath some healing benefit or refreshment then to communicate unto the soul. Wherefore let him yield himself to the leading of the Spirit, and by no means let slip that holy season of a more free and large effusion or pouring out of his soul before God: Always in the mean while remembring that he duly prepare himself, by some fore-going meditation, according to what hath been already in part spoken, and will hereafter be more fully considered.

And this practice, I presume, as it so far binds a man up, that his devotion shall not be loose and slighty, so it allows him (1.) such liberty as may duly exercise and improve any spiritual gifts which he conceives himself to have, and (2.) such variety as that there is no fear, that custome or treading always the same

same tract, (I mean repeating the same words) should make him guilty of formality and deadness. Part II. Chap. II.

If there be any Objection now lying against this proposed course in our devotion it is, as far as I can see, one of these two, either (1) that it will take up too much time, or (2) That those who for the general can use it, yet at all times cannot find opportunity for it, as of privacy when abroad, &c.

But as to the first case objected, we have already supposed our practist to be such, who lives somewhat above a servile life, and therefore may spare some part of his time, which surely he cannot spend to a better purpose, or upon more beneficial employment. And it will undoubtedly be found true by him, who shall set himself upon this practice, or put his devotions into this mold, that when he is once but got into the way, and setled in it, the performance of all will cost him less time by much in a day, than hath

Part II. Chap. II.

hath the reading of these directions. An hour in a day (or very little more) being divided into equal parts, and half taken in the morning, half at night, may very well suffice: and they are either very full of imployment, or exceeding bad husbands of their time, who, being at their own command, cannot afford so much time for so necessary a work. (Not to speak that some part of this work may be reckoned a kind of studying, and that as becoming, as useful to all such as we speak to.) Consider man, which is of greater concernment, thy souls, or thy bodies welfare? Which is longer, threescore years and ten, or *Eternity*? Canst thou therefore onely find time to provide for the more unworthy?

The latter opposition of want of privacy, when abroad is more or less considerable according to the accommodation and entertainment we meet with abroad, which sometimes is such that it gives us no less oppor-

opportunities of privacy than we have at home. Then, as to the utensils of our devotion. A Bible is easily got in the house; a Note-book in my pocket (out of which when I come home I may transcribe into my *Memorial* or *Accomptal* any thing which I judge fit) is no great burden: no more is my prayer-book if occasion be. So that in this case my devotions may be compleat. ¶ But suppose I be cast into a chamber amongst company and those such whom I like not much for overlookers of my devotion: In this case, supposing my company to be persons who will either scorn me and my Religion, or disturb me, it is better my devotions be less compleat, and private than more full and open. Now totally hindred of privacy I cannot be. I can pretend (and that without a lye) little common necessary business which may call me out while I can enquire into my self and pour out a short prayer to God walking or otherwise. And God

Part II. Chap. II.

God no doubt will accept my devotions when as perfect as I can, although not as I would.

PART

Part III.

Of more solemn, Retirement into the Closet upon *Holy days* and *Sundays*.

Chap. I.

That our devotions should be greater on Holy-days, *than on ordinary days. The end of* Festivals, *and their Vindication from abuses and Cavils.*

THat upon Holy-days or Festivals, they ought to be more taken

Part III. Chap. I.

taken up in devotion, than on other daies, there is no men I presume will deny, except they be so factious as to slight the Institution, or so sensual as not to understand the end and design of them.

It is as uncharitable as unreasonable a part, to conclude, because they bear the name ordinarily of certain Saints and Martyrs, that therefore the daies were superstitiously consecrated to the meer honour of those Saints. The design of the Church in this Institution seems to me only thus much.

First, that Almighty God might have particular glory for all the particular parts and degrees of the work of our redemption (the *Incarnation, Circumcision, Passion, Resurrection, &c.* of our Saviour) as likewise for all those his servants by whose doctrine and examples, whether in life or death, his holy Gospel hath been planted and confirmed. Then 2. that there might be due commemoration of such particular persons

and

and of the graces in which they did excel; as well to the end, that their examples (at leaſt) might be an immortal incitement to vertue, and they being dead might yet thus ſpeak; as that vertue might have its deſerved honour, which for the enforcement of like worthy practices upon others, comes not at all too late though it be given to the aſhes of the vertuous. Part III. Chap. 1.

And that theſe two, to wit, Giving particular honour to God, and the propagation of vertue, were the main aims of the Church, ſeems to be undeniable, if we do conſider either the particular Collects on thoſe daies, or that clauſe in the Prayer *for the Eſtate of Chriſts Church Militant*, towards the end, [*We bleſs thy name for all thy ſervants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beſeeching thee to give us grace to follow their good examples, &c.*] which prayer, we know, is one part of the Service of the Church upon every Feſtival, and both this

and

Part. III. Chap. 1.

and the forementioned Collects expresly profes as much as we affirm.

Now these as they cannot be rejected by any sober men (and so the end being right, and the power just, and the thing it self as just (which two last, because I see no reason for the questioning them, I let pass without any other proof, than the evidence which they carry with them) it cannot be seen how the institution should be amiss, wherefore the factious have an answer:) so they are directly frustrated by those, who look upon Festivals as meerly a time of liberty, and so many days devoted to pleasure or idleness. I will not say, but that both the Church and State, in setling these Institutions by Law, might have some aim at allowing servants, and those who live a servile life, some rest and time for lawful recreations, which sometimes the covetousness of some Masters, sometimes some persons own covetous-

ness would not allow them: (And this is justifiable even by the practise of God himself in the fourth Commandment, *that thy servant may rest*, &c.) but that it was never either the Churches or States intention, that they should wholly be spent to this purpose I do affirm and for proof hereof, *at home*, alledge our Laws, which enjoyn all on such days to resort to places of publick worship for the service of God, and *abroad*, that Imperial Constitution, *We will not that Holy-days, which are consecrate to the supreme Majesty, be imployed or spent upon pleasures.* And it would be a right pious work, and as much for the vindication of Festivals as any other, if Magistrates would, according as I am sure they may, punish those, who use to spend whole Holy-days in their pleasures (dancing, hunting runnings, footballs, *&c.*) by the legal mulct for absence from Divine Service.

God de. Feriis.

But may no recreation then be taken

Part II. Chap. 1.

taken upon Holydaies? I do not say, nor intend that: nor doth, I presume, the Law, neither new, or old. But the rest and (if by the rest we will understand any thing but a dull idleness) the refreshment of labouring persons, being one thing which, by the way, was designed in their Institution, plain it is that lawful recreations as they are exercises of refreshment, may on them be used. But as to such recreations, which shall supplant or thrust out the service of God, which is the main end to which the Festivals were ordained, I see not how they can without sin be frequented, practised, or tolerated: I am sure our Ecclesiastical Laws tolerate them not.

Further, I presume the genuine sense of the fourth Commandement enforceth as much as I press: For that enjoying a Jew to sanctifie the seventh day, that is the time which by their Law was set apart to the worship of God, will also (at least) in

in equity and reason enjoyn a Christian to sanctifie such times, as their Laws have consecrated to the Divine worship: which Laws touching the particular setting apart of times to the worship of God, though they are not all extant in Scripture, nor immediately delivered by the mouth of God; yet being made by them, whom he, to whom *all power both in Heaven and Earth was given*, hath commissionated and made his delegates (to wit, his Apostles, and their successors, the governours of the Church) cannot be looked upon as altogether humane, but have a certain stamp of Divinity; according as ordinarily we interpret the commands of the Kings officers, in such things wherein they are commissionated, to be the Kings commands. Now, that Holy days were ordained by the lawful governours of the Church, is too evident to be denied. And, I should not fear to say, that some of our present Feasts were at the least observed by some of the

Part III. Chap. 1.

Apostles, our Saviours immediate Substitutes. How therefore can we neglect to sanctifie such times, which are thus consecrated to God, that is, not imploy them to those separate uses, to which they were appointed (which is the meaning of sanctifying in this regard, in Scripture) without the unhallowing *holy* or *devoted* things, or without the evident breach of this Commandement.

I will add no more to this purpose, but that every one being bound to proportion his time for his devotion, according to the opportunities and leisure which he hath, and it being unlawful by the very municipal law or law of the Land (for such is the Ecclesiastical law in this case) totally to follow the work of my calling on Festivals or Holy-days, I cannot but have more leisure on them for the service of God, and therefore consequently a greater portion of it is to be spent in my devotions. Which being concluded, as most lawfully and rightfully it may

may in general, what hath been said holds as well concerning private as publick devotions. I ought therefore to think my self bound on every Holyday to somewhat more of devotion in private, than what every day calls for. Part. III. Chap. 2.

Chap. II.

What there should be of new in our Private devotions upon Holy days.

THe question now will be, what that is of new, which Festivals may seem properly to require of a Christian in his Closet-devotions.

To which it must be said, that as to the general substance of my devotions, it can scarce be other at any time, than what hath been already delivered, to wit, *Reading, Meditation and Prayer.* But yet each of these may be imployed a

Part III. Chap. 2.

while upon some new specialty, or particular matter which that days occasion and solemnity directs unto; to wit, upon the life or vertues of that particular Saint or Martyr, whose memory the day celebrates: or if the day be such which was intended onely to praise God for some particular transaction relating to our redemption (as the *Nativity* of our Lord, his *Circumcision*, &c.) to bend my devotions hitherward. To this purpose it may be proper, besides what I read in Holy Scripture that day by my constant course, (which should not at any time except upon evident necessity, or very considerable business be broken) to read those particular portions of Scripture which are by the Church appointed for that day; I meanthe *Epistle* and *Gospel* for the day. And these being read over with such care, as is before prescribed, to spend some time according to former rules in Meditation upon them: and then, either to my own prayers to take

take in the Collect of the day, or to add some other petitions and praises, as my Christian discretion shall judge seasonable. To this imployment if I allot an hour (or if need so require half an hour) besides what I ordinarily, on other days, spend on my devotions, the work may in some good measure be done. And it cannot be thought but so much time may well be spared by reason of that leisure and rest which the Law on that day enjoyns me.

Chap. III.

An Exemplification or Practice of the former rules in Christmas day, with a fit Prayer to be added to my ordinary Prayer upon that day.

NOw because all the directions given will be better under-

Part III. Chap. 3. ſtood and rendred more eaſiely practicable to the plaineſt, if a little exemplified, a pattern or two ſhall be ſet down of what there ſhould be of new in our devotions on Feſtivals and thoſe ſo framed, as that they may ſerve not only for inſtances in this laſt caſe, but for examples of practice to thoſe formerly given rules, touching *Reading* and *Meditating*.

Part II. Chap. 4. & 5.

And firſt for ſuch Feaſts which celebrate the memory of ſome particular in, or ſtept to, our redemption.

Amongſt theſe the copy ſhall be in *Chriſtmas day*. [The Epiſtle *Hebr.* I. v. 1. to v. 13.] Which having carefully read over, I cannot but obſerve (according to my firſt rule in Meditation) that the holy Ghoſts deſign is to expreſs the glory of our Saviour, and eſpecially his eminency above any, and all the Angels (which yet are the moſt glorious part of the Creation.) And this glory of his is expreſſed to be ſo eminent,

Part. II. Chap. 5.

eminent, not onely in respect of his Divine nature, as he is the expres's Image of his Fathers person, but also as he is God man, as having been born in our nature, *and purged our sins he sate down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* So that the very humane nature of our Saviour, how ever contemptible it might seem once to be, is now advanced infinitely above the *Angels*, *all the Angels being to worship* the incarnate Son of God, *and his Throne being established for ever.* Part III. Chap. 3.

Now there being in all this no considerable matter of difficulty which offers it self, I have no need here to apply my second rules (touching searching into difficulties) and therefore I proceed to the third, to consider what I am the better for having read this. The substance of it I have already gathered, in the practice of my first rule: that reviewing, to gain light to the particular parts, I find by the second verse my self instructed and confirm-

Part III. Chap. 3. ed in that point of my *faith*, the *Eternity of the second person*, or the Sons being from everlasting: For it is said *that God by his Son made the Worlds*, that is (as I may probably conclude) all things that are. His Son then was before the *Worlds*, that is from Eternity.

Again that admirable expression [*the brightness of the fathers glory, and express image of his person and the upholder of all things by his power*] what a glorious representation is it of the Sons *Deity*, and *being* distinct, but not separate, from his eternal father; according as the brightness of glory may be conceived as distinct from that glory, of which it is the brightness, but never can be apart from that glory.

Again that following expression [*after he had by himself purged our sins, Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*] with what an heavenly emphasis doth it set out.

1. The fulness of the atonement made

made by Christ as to every faithful person: by himself he purged our sins: and how can they not be pure before the Father, whose sins his only Son by himself hath purged?

2. The transcendency of our Saviours glorification [*He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*] What a blessed (ὑψηλός or) *bright* is here to express it! and how doth the very expression affect the considering mind! *he sat down at the right*, &c: me thinks I could say it an hundred times over with new admiration and dissolution of soul. It secretly insinuates also, what shall be our future glory, when we shall be like unto him, and *sit down with him at the right hand of the same Majesty.* More of the same nature might be noted, but this is sufficient to exemplifie the Rules.

I proceed now to consider the Gospel which also I am supposed to have read. [Gospel, *John* 1. ver. 1, to 15.] The scope and substance of this Gospel seems to be this, that our

Part III. Chap. 3

our Lord Jesus being God ever with the Father, in time took upon him our nature to redeem us, and that *John the Baptist* was a witness hereof.

But here are several expressions, which seem to contain some matter of faith touching our Saviour, and yet I do not perfectly understand them. Wherefore if I have any help (as before directed to, by the second Rule touching Meditation upon Scripture) I consult that touching this whole portion of Scripture. Which having consulted I may be supposed in some tolerable measure to understand what is held forth therein necessary to be believed. If I have no such book or help, then I must make as good shift as I can: and considering the scope and drift of the place beforementioned, and every particular expression at which I stick, I interpret that which I doubt of, with a regard to, and by the light I can take from, what I understand. Thus having

the

the general scope of this Scripture in my mind, I review it, or consider it again in the order as it lies. Nothing do I meet with which I do not in a good measure understand till I come to ver. 4 & 5. (For having observed at the first reading, that (ver. 14.) the Apostle, saith the *Word was made flesh*, by the *Word* in the 1 verse I can understand nothing but the eternal Son of God) *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* What life? or how is the life the light of men? I consider that the holy Ghost is here speaking of the Deity of the Son, and in the third verse ascribes the making of all things to him. Then it follows *In him was life.* It is very likely that the meaning hereof is thus much. *He is the fountain of life*, he made as well the things which live as those which do not. He communicated life to all living. *And the life was the light of men*, It is very likely, that life here is to be understood of that natural life, which all men

Part III. Chap. 3.

men whatsoever live: for he speaks of Christ as the Creator of all living. Now, whereas it is said, that this *life is the light of men*, or that that life which men do partake of from God, is light; haply the meaning hereof may be, that the life, which the Creator gave to man, was a more lightsome (that is, a more intelligent) life than what the rest of living creatures here below partake of; to wit, a Rational life. Now it follows, *The light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* It is very likely that by *light* I must understand in this verse, what I did thereby in the former, to wit, Reason: and so considering all more attently, at length I guess, that some such thing as this is the import of that verse.

The natural light of mans reason shone in his corrupt and sensual nature, but that nature followed not the dictates of it: Men rejected what their reason would have guided them to choose. And this, being that

that I was led thereto by consider- Part III.
ing the drift of the words, and find Chap. 3.
now that the words will, to my best judgment, very well bear, I conceive may probably be the meaning of this place. But here it may be very necessary to admonish (especially ordinary people) that they proceed not too far upon their own judgements in interpreting darker places of Scripture, of which this haply may seem one. We have only in what we have said shewn the best way, which can be taken for the finding out the sense of Scripture. But if so be, that using this method I particularly could not have found out so much touching the sense of this Scripture, as hath been above declared, yet had not either my reading or my meditation been fruitless. I could very well and very profitably have rested in this, that I observed these verses to testifie to me, that Christ is God, and by him all things were made; and that from him came life, and all the light, which in life

men

Part III. Chap. 3.

men have. And thus much, by observation, a plain person might have found from hence. But usually plain persons will do best, not to trust the strength of their own reason, which commonly is none of the best judge of consequences and dependances, but rather get to themselves such helps as above directed to, and follow their wholesome guidance.

Well: having found out as I conceive thus much of the meaning of this Scripture, if there be any thing else I doubt of in that part of it which remains I proceed to consider it, carrying still in my mind the scope of the whole, and thus much as I have learnt of the sense of the former part. The substance of the remaining part seems to me thus much, That when it pleased the *Word to be made flesh* (that is, the Son of God to take upon him our nature, and in that nature to dwell) *John the Baptist* was sent for a witness to testifie, that this was the *true light*,

light, to the end that *men might* believe: And to as many of mankind as did believe upon, and receive this light, this light (himself being the eternal and natural Son of God) gave the priviledge, right or power to become through him the Sons of God, being now born unto a new (*viz.* a godly) life by their receiving him. Now here it may be (as I look through the particular verses) are one or two things more of moment which I doubt of, and touching which I will consult the best helps I have, or, otherwise consider with as much attention and modesty as I can.

First, in what sense should Christ be termed the *true light*?

This considering of, I remember that before, there was mention of a certain *light* which all men did partake from the *Word* as created by him (to wit, their Reason) and this light, though it shone in them, yet (as the first man did not follow its shine so) the rest did reject its guidance

Part III. Chap. 3

dance, and the *darkneſs received*, or *comprehended it not*. But now it is ſaid, *that the Word*, that is, *Chriſt made fleſh*, is *the true light*: both which conſidering together, the import of all ſeems to be this, That whereas the natural light of reaſon, being not comprehended, but rather overcome) by the darkneſs of mans corrupt nature, was inſufficient, of it ſelf, to lead man unto his ſalvation or true happineſs, and, being ſophiſticated by the ſame corruption, had led him to ſeek happineſs in many falſe and by paths, Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to bring to light the true way to happineſs, and ſo was the *true light*.

From whence alſo I begin to ſee ſomewhat into the ſecond paſſage which I doubted of, to wit, what ſhould be the meaning of that [*as many as received him.*] For, conſidering how the Evangeliſt in the verſes immediately foregoing ſpeaks of Chriſt, to wit, as the *true light*, I eaſily ſee, that to receive him is to imbrace

imbrace him as the light, and so to apply my self to those holy wayes which he hath discovered, alone to lead unto happiness. Which also the following words further intimate [*them that believe in his name*] that is them, who by their imbracing the discovery which he hath made, and doing accordingly, do manifest that they are perswaded he is the true light: which thing they do, not as they are born by *the will of man*, of flesh and bloud (for the *darkness comprehendeth not the light*) but as begotten, or created over again by God hereto. Part III. Chap. 3.

So then, now I conceive I understand the *Gospel for this day*, and all the most concerning particulars in it. The substance of it therefore I recollect after this my search, to the end it may sink the deeper into me, and I be the better verst hereafter in this Scripture. And that is this, That Christ being eternally God, was also together with God (with whom he ever was) the Creator of all things, and

Part III. Chap. 3.

and particularly of man; that man in his creation received a certain light (*viz.* his reason) which he opposed and overcame, rather than followed: that therefore it pleased Christ to be made man, and coming into the world, to discover the true way to happiness unto degenerate man, and as many of mankind, who embraced this discovery, and manifested their belief of Christs being the *true light*, by their receiving him as such, he restored into the blessed state of being the Sons of God (as *Adam* was before his fall.) And of all this *John the Baptist* was sent before to be a witness, that by his testimony men might be prepared to believe in this *true light*.

Luke 3. 38.

Thus much then I am improved in point of knowledge. But is there nothing which may be further useful to me as to practicals? No promise of mercy? No threat of punishment to any? Nothing to quicken me to my duty? This surely.

First,

First, that is a remarkable expression, *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God.* I cannot expect ever to be by my incarnate Lord, made a Son of God, and Heir with him in the Kingdome of his Father, except I receive him as the *true light*, except I look for happiness by the method by him delivered, a holy Christian practice, according to his Gospel. I see therefore hence the necessity of being conformable to all the Commands of the Gospel. He is salvation to none to whom he is not light: If therefore I am not faithful, meek, charitable, holy, *&c.* as the Gospel directs, salvation it self will not save me.

Further, both the Epistle and Gospel put me in mind of, what the day celebrates, the Incarnation of our Saviour (at least his visible Incarnation, for to the eye he was not Incarnate till born.) *The Word was made flesh*, and so himself spake unto us, *and by himself he purged*

Part III. Chap. 3.

purged our sins. The Word, who was that? *The Son of God, the brightness of his Fathers glory, the express Image of his Person, he who was ever with God, and ever God, heir of all things, by whom all things were made, he was made flesh. O the depth of the love of God and Christ!* Whose soul can well hold to contemplate it!

Besides this admiration, and dissolution of soul, the thoughts hereof cannot but be thus further useful to me.

First, seeing from what an infinite glory, to what a mean nature and condition, the Son of God (himself the infinite God) stooped for the help and saving of men, I cannot but see my self in duty bound to the like humility, meekness and condescention, not to stand upon mine own petty interests, and consult nothing but self, when I have opportunity to do good to any inferiour that wants my succour. Had Christ done so, he had never been made

made flesh for me. Now *let the same mind be in me which was also in Christ Jesus.* Part III. Chap. 3. Phil. 2. 5.

And again, seeing to what an height of excellency the nature of mankind is now advanced, it should prevail with me to put a due price upon it, and never willingly to dishonour, by any unworthy action, what God himself hath so honored. Did God stoop to vindicate my nature from the contempt and tyranny of the devil, and shall I, notwithstanding all the condescensions of his grace, still wilfully enslave and destroy my self.

Further, God having united the nature, of which I am a partner, to him, I should be ambitious of all means of uniting my self to him, that is, of doing all that may be on my part to further this union.

And especially, the thoughts hereof should quicken me this day to a zealous participating his body and blood. Can I consider God made flesh for me, God debasing himself

Part. III. Chap. 3.

himself to be one with me, and is it possible that I can neglect, what is so much for my honor and interest, as the means of sealing my particular union with him? How can I esteem my self duly to have celebrated the memory of his being made flesh, if having means of partaking of that flesh which he took, I neglect it? And how much of ingratitude must such neglect have in it.

Lastly, seeing that one great end of our Saviours being incarnate was, to be the true light to man in the pursuit of his happiness, let me account it a noble degree of assimilation or being like my Saviour, if I can in any measure be a light to any herein. And if God have by office made me such, let me prize and honor my imployment, and manifest my value of it by my diligence in it. *The more light I give, the nearer do I in my office come unto my Saviour.*

Thus much then of incitement have I hence to my duty. My other

rules

rules are not here so applicable: Wherefore in the conclusion of my Meditations I consider what of new all that I have meditated, doth suggest unto this daies prayers: And that I shall find { Praise. / Petition. } to be matter of

Part III. Chap. 3.

See Part II. ch. 5.

As to the first,

1. The infinite goodness of God, that he would at all think of restoring that nature, which was now an enemy to him, having wilfully fallen from him, cannot, if duly considered, but melt my heart into thankful praise of him.

2. That (yet) greater commendation of his goodness, his infinite condescension, his redeeming our nature in a way so glorious to it, as was the assumption of it unto his own nature, methinks should overcome my soul, and wrap it into an extasie of praise and admiration. In all likelihood, infinite wisdome might have thought of a course, which would have been less honourable to man, and would not

so

Part III. Chap. 3.

so much (if I may so speak) have humbled the Deity. But he would not bring us to glory ingloriously. The meer consideration therefore of the honour, which our Lords Incarnation puts upon our ill deserving nature, will not suffer me to be silent this day in his praises.

And as to matter of Petition, surely it cannot but be right seasonable to beseech, 1. That all this may not be in vain unto me: And 2. That to that end, I may transcribe these Copies of goodness, humility, and purity, which shone in our Saviours Incarnation, and walk in the light, as well of his example, as doctrine. And all this I may do in some such words as these.

A Prayer to be added to my other daily Prayers on Christmas-day.

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who,

our

out of thy meer goodneſs and pitty, having promiſed thy Son to redeem faln mankind, didſt in the fulneſs of time faithfully perform with thine hand what thou hadſt ſpoken with thy mouth, and ſend him into the world made, and about this time born of a woman: I, one of that redeemed, though vile nature, humbly adore this thy Grace and faithfulneſs. Eternity, Lord, is too little to bleſs thee for it: But Eternal praiſe is the greateſt that I can wiſh thee: and maiſt thou to Eternity receive due glory for this thine infinite Goodneſs and Mercy!

O Thou the onely begotten Son, *by whom* thine eternal Father made the Worlds, who waſt ever with God, and ever

Part III Chap. 3.

God, the brightneſs of his Glory, and expreſs Image of his Perſon, yet waſt pleaſed in time to be made fleſh, and pitch thy Tabernacle in our nature: I, part of the purchaſe of thy bloud, poor duſt and aſhes, but ſuch as thine infinite Glory was pleaſed for my ſake once to wear, and now to glorifie, and ſet above Angels, moſt humbly bleſs thee, as well for this thy condeſcenſion, as for the honour done to man. *Thou tookeſt not upon thee the nature of Angels, but the ſeed of* Abraham *thou didſt take.* Even ſo, O Saviour, for ſo it hath ſeemed good to thee. Thou thoughteſt not the Angelical nature low enough for thine Infinity to ſtoop to. Moſt dear Jeſus! thou haſt overcome

come me. I would praise thee, but I cannot further. —— Accept my silent ravishment, admiration, and faith. *I believe. Lord, help my unbelief.*

O holy Spirit, the power of the most High; who after an unconceiveable sort, overshadowing the Virgin Mother, didst frame in her sacred Womb that Holy Thing which * was called the Son of God; for this thy most wonderful and fearful (but to man most happy) operation, I unworthy man bless thee: beseeching thee to inspire my heart, that I may from this blessed Copy transcribe these Virtues of Goodness, Humility, Love,

* *That is, was the Son of God. For in Scripture many times being called, and being, (word and thing) are one and the same.*

Part III Chap. 4.

Purity, and whatsoever mine holy Saviour, either by his Life or Doctrine hath taught me: that so, I walking in his light, he may be to me life everlasting, to the praise of thee, O Father, Son, and holy Spirit, one undivided God, Eternally. *Amen.*

Chap. IV.

An Exemplification of the former rules in St. Stephen's *day: With a Prayer which may be used on any Saints day.*

FOr the Epistle, *Acts* 7, v. 55. to the end. Which, having read, I find to be a narrative or relation of St. *Stephen's* Martyrdom. And the chief substantials that my thoughts

thoughts fix upon, are, That Encouraging vision vouchsafed to him, in his entrance upon his suffering, and the manner of his taking his suffering.

St. *Stephen*, the first of those, who were to pass to Heaven in the fiery Chariot of a violent death, for the witness of Jesus, was now as good as sentenced: for the defence, which he had made, had only further incensed his persecutors. But he, who should make the first trial of so bold a passage, had need of some more than ordinary encouragement: It pleased therefore him, whose Witness he was, to command away the Clouds, and through the opened Heavens to shew himself standing at the right hand of God, ready to receive him thither. And seeing the passage now so clear, and the end so glorious, it was not likely that good *Stephen* should stumble at a stone or two. *This method doth the gracious providence of God observe, that where he gives a bitterer cup, there he secretly*

Part III. Chap. 4.

ly provides greater encouragements, and thereby raiſeth the ſtrength of his ſuffering ſervants.

Anſwerable to his encouragement do I find St. *Stephens* cariage, For being caſt out of the City, and ſtoned, all is ſo far from daunting him, that it ſcarce ſeems to have diſturbed him; for he readily prays to his Saviour both in his own and his murtherers behalf. Particularly, theſe Virtues I cannot but obſerve livelily ſhining in him ſuffering.

1. Conſtancy, Reſolution and Chriſtian Magnanimity in thoſe ſufferings which a truly Chriſtian cauſe engaged him in. 2. Notwithſtanding all his extraordinary aſſurances of glory (Chriſt witneſing it to him from Heaven in that bleſſed Viſion) perſeverance in earneſt prayer to the laſt. When the ſtones now ſtruck him, he called upon God and ſaid, *&c.* 3. Quietneſs, patience and ſerenity: The injuſtice of his ſufferings exaſperates not

not his Spirit, nor puts him into any passion or indisposition for his duty. 4. Meekness, Charity, Forgiveness, even towards them, who in that they were enemies to him, were enemies also to Christ. He *kneeled down* [An expression of the solemnity of his Prayers] *and cried with a loud voice* [an expression of the earnestness and fervour of them.] A pattern most worthy imitation in suffering. Part III. Chap. 4.

A double benefit then the substance of this portion of Scripture (recollected according to direction) yields to me. The first, an Antidote or Remedy against dejection under, and slavish fear of suffering. If God at any time call me to the bearing a greater weight of afflictions than ordinary, let not me basely or sinfully decline them, but rather remember what St. *Stephen* (and indeed all the Children of God have) found by experience, that strength shall be given in proportionably, and that suitable to my mi- Part II. Chap. 5.

Part III. Chap. 4.

misery shall comfort and refreshment come in to sustain my spirit, if I nobly engage. Secondly, St. *Stephen's* example is to me a copy how I ought to suffer. Hence should I transcribe, Constancy, Dutifulness, Patience, Charity, and whatever other virtues I can observe him to have exercised in his sufferings.

Now as to particular expressions here, that which concludes the relation cannot well pass without notice. *And when he had said this, he fell asleep*: In sweetness and love he breathed out his soul; and he doing so, pitty it was, but that so sweet a soul, death it self should be sweetned, and so it was: *He fell asleep*. It teacheth me how I am to look on death. To all men death is but a sleep: good or bad, they must awake from it. But a good mans death should be look'd upon onely as a falling asleep, or as another Scripture saith, *Resting from his labours*: Death is much the easiest to good men.

Of

Of these notes or remarks which I have thus in my Meditations on this Reading made, those which I have mind chiefly to fasten upon my self (though I would not forget any) are these, which follow, of which therefore I register in my Memorial some hints, perhaps so as follows.

"St. *Stephen's* day, 1664.

"*Acts* 7.

"*Verse* 54, 55. God ever proportions his Servants comforts "to their sufferings.

"*Verse* 60. *He fell asleep.* How "sweetly do good men dye! Also, "a fit Petition to use when I pray "for enemies; *Lord lay not this sin* "*to their charge.*

"I noted all along in St. *Stephen* "these Christian Graces. 1. Constancy and Courage. 2. Perse"verance in Prayer, notwithstand"ing the immediate revelation of "his instant Glory. 3. Patience. "4. Charity and Forgiveness.

This pattern will serve for direction

Part III Chap. 4.

ction in what we ordinarily intend; and it is brief, because it is supposed a pattern to be followed in what we in daily course observe or set down. But if on Holy days any have a mind to be larger in their setting down their Meditations, this hinders not.

The Gospel, *Matt.* 23. *v.* 34. to the end.

Observing the scope of this Scripture, I find it to be a Prophecy of the dismal calamity which should befal the *Jews*, by reason of their wilful rejecting the Gospel; and cutting off them who were sent to preach it, according as their stubborn forefathers had cut off the Prophets. A judgement should befall them, which should be in some measure a proportionable revenge of all the righteous bloud which
Ver. 35. had been *shed, from Abel to Zachary*: and this by reason that they did persist in shedding such righteous bloud, as they indeed did in the case of our Saviour, and his perse-

cuted

cuted followers. Their City there- Part III.
fore ſhould become a deſolation, and Chap. 4.
the very worſhip of God being laid waſte, they ſhould expect the Meſſiah ſo long, that they ſhould even bleſs him that could tell them any thing of him.

This is the general ſubſtance of this Scripture. Difficulty in it I find none to ſtop me: I proceed therefore to enquire what of advantage I can make by the reading of it, according to my propoſed courſe: And, 1. I find my ſelf, by the obſerving the two firſt verſes of it, much ſatisfied touching one caſe, in which I have many times thought God to deal very hardly, to wit touching his viſiting the ſins of the fathers upon the children. *Verſe* 35. It is ſaid, that upon that generation ſhould fall *all the righteous bloud ſpilt from Abel to Zachary*, which, at the firſt look ſeems very ſevere. But the reaſon is rendred *ver.* 34, becauſe, of *the Prophets, wiſe men and ſcribes, which Chriſt ſent amongſt them*,

Part III Chap. 4.

them, some they would kill and crucifie, some scourge in their Synagogues, others persecute from City to City, according as their forefathers ever had served the Prophets: Which gives me ground to conclude, *That children seldom or never inherit their fathers punishments*, or the wrath due to their fathers sins, *but where they first prove inheritors of those sins*: And in this case, because they have seen their fathers sins, and the punishments which have befallen them for them, and yet not mended by their examples, it is but justice, that their fathers sins should be visited upon them, that they should have the same or like punishments as their fathers had, and greater.

Then, 2. I cannot but note how slowly and unwillingly God comes to judgement. Thus much those words, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, suggest to me. Our Saviour, I see, cannot foretell this desertion and rejection of the *Jews* without a lamentation taken up, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.*

salem. So unwilling is he to punish that he even weeps at the very thoughts of it. [This is a very affecting consideration, and of special force to quicken me to repentance, and is therefore to be noted to that purpose.]

Lastly, examining further according to the rules proposed, whether there be no instance of Gods judgements against sinners, no threat to deter me from any sin, or the like, I find there is, and cannot but stay my thoughts a while upon this heavy denunciation of woe against those, who were outwardly Gods own people, for their rejecting the offers of grace, and upon foolish prejudices not acknowledging, or not being willing to see the light, which yet they could not but see. *And if God spared not the natural branches, how much less will he spare me, who am only grafted in, out of the wild olive, if I be guilty of the same sin?* It concerns me therefore in this case to look into my self: the very

Part III. Chap. 4.

very reading of this Scripture ought to be to me a warning. And let me see: Am I not guilty of the like *resisting light* and *rejecting grace*? What do I else when I sin presumptuously, and only not *wilfully*? Do not I then shut mine eyes against the light, and offer violence to the convictions, which come from those Scriptures, whose Authors, the *Jews*, were rejected, for offering violence unto? They rejected their living testimony, I not only that (for that I have in the Scripture) but the very voice of their bloud, by which they sealed the truth of their testimony. Oh sinful and ungracious wretch!

Now if any such as this be my case, let my meditations here rest a while. Let me consider whether in this Scripture, which hath thus convinced me of my sin, there be not somewhat which may reclaim me. And truly there is 1. (That which hath already been mentioned) Gods unwillingness to punish, his patience

patience and forbearance. And hath not this been great towards me? How often have the warm offers of love and pardon invited me, as they did them! May not I say, God would have many a time *gathered me under his wings?* And do not these very warnings, that if I am not reclaimed, I must be forsaken, speak Gods present unwillingness (if any thing will work) to forsake me? Is not this as much as an *O Ierusalem, Ierusalem?* Again, 2. I here see, that though God bore long with his people, he would not bear alwayes, being that they did persist in resistance of his Grace. And truly I know not how soon God may call home from me his opposed Spirit, and, suffering his Grace no longer to be abused, leave me as he did the *Iews*, in my own stubbornness and wilfulness to perish. Part III. Chap. 4.

After this sort may I imploy a while my thoughts; and if time will suffer, thus ought I so long to meditate,

Part III. Chap. 4.

tate, till my moved heart have taken up full resolutions of following the guidance of Gods Spirit, and yielding to his Grace. And these warnings or convictions from the Word, together with my resolutions upon them, should I (if able, register in that other of my paper Books, which I call my *Accomptal*, or if not) take such solemn notice of, that I forget not. But if any necessary matter force me to depart my privacy, before my meditations arrive at such a ripeness, yet let me not fail to take notice of the warning which I received and set it down in my Accomptal, that so upon my * fasting day, when I review the actions of that week, I may be sure not to forget it, but to humble my self for my former miscarriages, and consider for the future, how I may turn my feet into new wayes.

See Part IV. Ch. 4. &c.

But to return to the devotions of this present day: So much only remains now to compleat my present meditations as to consider,

what

what of new from all will be seasonable to be added to my accustomed Prayers. And here will be,

First, Matter of confession touching my resisting Grace, and not walking according to the light which I have had.

Secondly, Matter of praise.

1. For these warnings, which are so many calls to repentance, and invitations to happiness.

2. For the testimony which the Gospel received, & doth to this day receive, by the doctrine and death of S. *Stephen*, and for the constancy, faithfulness, patience, charity and meekness which shone forth in him.

Thirdly, Matter of Petition.

1. For grace, that I may from henceforth yield unto all motions of Gods holy Spirit. 2. That when ever God shal cal me to suffer (as he doth frequently by the crosses, oppositions, frustrations, *&c.* which I meet with in the course of my life) I may manifest the like meekness, patience,

charity,

Part III. Chap. 4.

charity, holy resolution and mindfulness of God by prayer and all other seasonable duties. All which, having considered how I may in some sober and orderly way express or represent before God, let me either insert in my wonted prayers, or in some short prayer to be added to them comprise as well as I can. A pattern whereof very particular it will not be so expedient to set down here, but rather so to frame a Prayer with some respect to the foregoing heads, as that it may in general be accommodated to, or used upon the Feasts of any Saints or Martyrs.

A short Prayer which may be added to our ordinary prayers upon the feast of any Saint or Martyr by our Church appointed to be kept.

O Lord, the God of truth and holiness, who at sundry times, and in sundry ways hast revealed thy self unto the world, by thy holy Prophets of old, and in these last days by thy Son, of whom thou hast since in all ages raised up thy Saints and Servants to be witnesses. I humbly bless thee, as for all the revelations of thy will, and confirmations of thy truth; so especially for the testimony given thereunto by the life

Part III. Chap. 4.

life [(a) doctrine] [and (b) death] of thy servant St. S. whom thou madest unto the world not only a witness of thy truth, but a pattern of holiness: and I beseech thee to pardon both all my opposing, and all my holding in unrighteousness those truths, which either he or any other of thy servants have preached, or left on record. I acknowledge and bewaile my guiltiness herein: Keep me, blessed Father, for the future (at least) from all such presumptuous sins; and grant that the same Spirit resting upon me, which dwelt upon them, may beget in

(a) *The word* Doctrine *is chiefly to be used upon the feasts of the blessed Apostles.*

(b) *If the feast be not the memorial of a Martyr, the word* death *is to be left out.*

in me the like humility, charity, [* *] diligence, resolution, and perseverance in all holiness. Let me as they both in life and death glorifie thee, according to my measure; so that amongst those heavenly Hosts and blessed Society of thy Servants, I may have some (though it should be the lowest) place, eternally to praise and enjoy thee *O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one most glorious God.* Amen.

* *Here insert the mention of any Christian virtue, in which thou hast observed the Saint whose memory thou celebratest to excel.*

Chap.

Chap. V.

Of what remains to compleat my private Festival devotions, to wit, Alms-giving.

SOme time, besides what my ordinary course requires, being thus spent in Reading, Meditation, and Prayer, suitable to the particular regard of the day, it onely remains to compleat my devotions, that according as God hath blessed me I set apart somewhat for the poor; for it is not certainly my self, or my rich neighbours onely, which I am to feast upon Holydays: and however, it may be, I cannot give in my closet, yet I may in my closet, and at the end of my devotions most conveniently, cheerfully, and religiously (and it may be most liberally) consecrate, what I can spare, to such pious use, by separating

ting it from the reſt, which I reſerve for ordinary uſes. And ſomewhat every Holy day would I caſt to have thus to conſecrate to God, though it were the leſs: By the obſerving this courſe I ſhall commonly, if not always, have wherewithal to relieve the wants of ſuch, whom I meet with and find to be truly indigent; which, if I do not uſe my ſelf to ſome ſuch method, I may haply many times want a ſtock for. Whether to diſtribute it in money, or in that which is bought with my money, and may be more ſuitable to the wants of thoſe whom I relieve, a little Chriſtian diſcretion will eaſily direct. And the more to enforce this practice, let me conſider how naked, miſerable and ſtingy ſolemn Thankſgiving is, without ſomewhat of Almes-giving. Then ſurely I rejoyce in a way moſt becoming the mercies I and mankind have received, when as many as I have wherewithal conveniently to help, have cauſe to rejoyce for my rejoycing:

Part III. Chap. 5.

Part. III. Chap. 5.

rejoycing: and on the contrary, if being able (by doing but what is my duty, at leaſt what I well may) to revive poor and diſconſolate perſons, I ſuffer them (through my cloſe-handedneſs) to groan under their diſtreſſes upon daies of publick joy, what a blemiſh is it to thoſe daies joy, and what want of Chriſtian goodneſs and charity doth it beſpeak in me? I ſhould rather be greedy and ambitious to make all the world rejoyce with me.

Now, for the making at leaſt thus much of Almesgiving an act of my private devotion, no one will, I preſume, be diſſatisfied, who either conſiders the premiſes and the nature of the thing, or what our Saviour ſaith touching this matter, *Let not thy right hand know what* in this caſe *thy left hand doth.* Let therefore, I ſay, my charity crown my devotions: and as I put out that (whatſoever it is) which I have to devote unto God, for the relief of his wanting ſervants, it will not be amiſs

Mat. 6. 3.

amiss to use some short ejaculation directed unto his allseeing Majesty, by which I may express my chearful offering it unto him, that is my setting it apart for the poor, whom he hath commanded me to succour, and promised me a *blessing* if I *consider*. Now that may be done in some such words as these. Part. II. Chap. 5. Psa. 41. 1.

O Lord, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, I offer unto thee (what, by thy gift and blessing, I have) this small testimony of my thankfulness and duty, to be bestowed upon those wanting ones whom thy providence shall give me opportunity to relieve. Be thou pleased through the bloud of my Saviour to accept it, and pardon all my vain expences. *Amen. Amen.*

The using some such course as

Part III. Chap. 5.

this proposed will make me more liberal in these my acts of charity: for how can I offer nigardly to this my bountiful God, when I am conscious to my self, I have somewhat considerable, (if I will well husband all,) which I may devote to him, and yet not abridge my self or mine, either of necessaries or conveniencies: and hereto I shall be the more quickened, if I remember I offer to God, who both gave me, and sees all I have. Now whether may upon such a day meet with opportunity to my mind, or such a person to bestow it on, as the discretion of my charity could wish, or whether I cannot, yet let me account it really given to God, and therefore separate it from the rest of the store, so that ever after I may look upon it as devoted, and not to be touched, except to distribute it to the poor, for I have really, by the prayer above-made, devoted and consecrated it to God. But if any fatal necessity should constrain the medling with any part of ought

ought thus separated, let me religiously observe to return it again to the poor mans purse or stock, with an expiatory usury; that is, with somewhat more, which may make recompence for my first diminishing it. And thus we will leave the private devotions of Festivals, and consider, in the next place, what will be meet to be performed on the Lords day. Part III. Chap. 6.

Chap VI.

That the Lords day ought to be kept holy, and what that means.

TOuching the observation of the Lords day, though I judge them indiscreet friends unto it, who referre the institution of it mainly to the fourth Commandement, yet I put the keeping of it holy so far out of all question, that I cannot but account him very unchristian, who either is slighty herein himself, or

Part III. Chap. 8.

goes about to poſſeſs others that they may be ſo without ſin.

The true *grounds* of ſanctifying the Lords day ſummed up.

(1.) The natural juſtice of the thing, that there ſhould be ſome time ſet apart amongſt the Chriſtian community for the publick and ſolemn worſhip of God; (2) The antiquity and authority of that Apoſtolick canon (recorded partly in expreſs terms in Scripture, and (if it were not) ſufficiently manifeſt by their practice) which hath ſet apart this time (3.) Our Saviours honouring this day with his reſurrection thereupon, which gave occaſion to its being ſet apart, (4.) The cuſtom of all Chriſtian Churches through all ages, and from the very Apoſtles days. (5.) Nay the practice of our Lord himſelf on this day meeting his aſſembled Diſciples, are all of them arguments beyond contradiction, and *warrant* (ſufficiently divine, that it is to be eſteemed conſecrate or ſet apart to the worſhip of God. And then the force which the fourth Commandement in equity bears,

1 Cor. 16. 1. 2.

that

that what time is ſet apart or conſecrated to God ſhould be ſanctified, that is ſpent to thoſe ſeparate purpoſes and intents, for which it was ſet apart (which I ſay is the meaning of ſanctifying or keeping holy any time) ſufficiently and beyond all evaſion enjoyns its being kept holy, it being ſuppoſed once to be ſet apart, as it is before proved to have been. And certainly (if as is undeniable, it be the duty of every Chriſtian, as much as may be to keep all his life as a perpetual Sabatiſm or holy reſt unto God) it muſt needs be an argument of a very profane, worldly, and unchriſtian ſpirit, not to afford God this day free from ſenſual pleaſures, and worldly cares or labours. Wherefore, I ſay, the keeping holy of the Lords day, I put out of all queſtion, and would have no man flatter himſelf, that he is a devout Chriſtian, who uſeth either by idleneſs or pleaſures, or unneceſſary worldly buſineſs to profane what (the

Part III. Chap. 6.

Heb. 4. 10.

Part III. Chap. 6.

Church, and being that the Church hath done it, by good warrant and power transmitted to her by Christ) God himself hath hallowed. Profanation I call it: for if the spending it to holy purposes be to sanctifie it, then the spending it contrarily upon ordinary or unworthy practices, is to profane it. And if we may not *give that which is holy unto dogs*, Matt. 7. 6. it is then surely most intolerable to take that time, which by divine Law ought to be holy unto God, and give it to his enemies, the devil, this world, and our own lusts, which we do when we spend the Lords day either in idleness, pleasures, or needless worldly matters.

Works of *Charity* or *Mercy* are *acts of Holiness*: and works of *necessity*, so far forth as they are works of necessity, are acts of *mercy*, and consequently the doing of either of these (that is works of *Charity* or *Necessity*) when due occasion calls me thereto, is rather sanctifying than unhallowing the Lords day) especially

(especially if I do them out of duty towards God, and in his fear) and for this I have his warrant, who tells me that he better accepts *Mercy than Sacrifice.* Matt. 6. 13.

Chap. VII.

Of Preparation for the Lords day. A Preparatory Prayer thereto.

SEeing then that the Lords day is to be kept holy, that is, to be spent in the worship and service of God, for which it is set apart, it concerns me to consider how I may spend it in a way most complying with this its design or intendment. And I shall easily, upon the very consideration of the nature of Gods worship, be convinced, that it is in a manner impossible for me duely to sanctifie it, if I come unto it hot and wreaking from my worldly bu-

Part III. Chap. 7.

neſs. For being I am to worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth, with all my mind, ſoul and ſtrength, and in a word with my whole man, evident it is that I am unable ſo to do, while my heart yet remains unemptied of the world: and being unfit to worſhip God, I am not, while ſo, in a due ſtate to ſanctifie this day. Wherefore the right ſanctification of the Lords day is to begin with Preparation.

And it is a right wholſome inſtitution, that upon the Evening before it, there ſhould be Prayers in every Pariſh Church, which is grown now too much into diſuſe by reaſon onely (that I can imagine) of the degeneracy of the age. If there be ſuch cuſtome kept up in my Pariſh, I would not, but upon neceſſity, be abſent from thoſe preparatory prayers: At which, though I ſhould be ſuppoſed to have been preſent, yet would I not content my ſelf therewith: but, whether I have been imployed publickly in preparations

parations or not, in my course of devotion, on Saturday night, take so much more time than I do ordinarily, as might serve for some preparatory Meditations and Prayers. Part III. Chap. 7.

The least which I can do to this purpose in my Meditations, is, First, To examine whether there be not some sin or sad miscarriage of the week past, which lies unrepented of, and so may blast my next daies performances. And if any there be, secondly, to consider of it more particularly, its aggravations, its nature, whether it be not such an one, part of the *Repentance*, for which must be *Reconciliation*, *Restitution*, or somewhat like: and accordingly to apply my self to what I in my conscience, and in the fear of God do judge due repentance. Thirdly, to endeavour the emptying my head of worldly (at least distracting) cares to bid them be gone now, till a day for them return: And lastly, so to contrive (as neer as I can) all my affairs

See Part 4. Chap. 6. Sect. 4, 5. &c.

Part III. Chap. 7.

affairs for the next day, that both I and my family may have as little avocations, or matters to call away our minds from holy duties as may be. This by way of Meditation.

My Prayers must be suitable to my condition. If any such sin, as before mentioned, be found, that must be confessed, bewailed, and pardon craved, together with grace for the future against it: which may be done by putting in the mention of that sin in the proper *space* left for such purpose. But besides this, it will be necessary to add some particular petitions for due preparation or disposition of heart for the duties of the next day. First, for a quiet, setled, and composed mind, so that I may attend, with all my soul, my holy concerns or business. Secondly, for enlivened affections, that I may not be dull and heartless, but of a tender and melting spirit. Thirdly, for a pliable ductile yielding and easie mind, that I may mix the word with faith,

faith, and render the obedience of faith. Lastly, because both my own and the Congregations benefit and edification much depends upon the Ministers due and affectionate discharge of his office, it is therefore fit I forget not him, but commend him to the assistance of the Spirit. To which purpose the following prayer may be either inserted in some fit place towards the end of my prayers or added to them.

O Lord from whom the preparations of the heart are: The day now approacheth which, being holy unto thee, I am to spend in thy more solemn worship. Many sins there are by me not duely repented of, which may justly bring upon me a curse instead of a blessing. [Especially

Part III. Chap. 7.

cially my [**] may make my very prayers an abomination to thee.] But accept thou I beseech thee of this my confession of them, and (at least desired) sorrow for them. Turn my heart from them for the future: and through the bloud of my Saviour so remove the guilt of them, that they may not hinder good things from me. Let the effusions of thy grace both upon me and all the Congregations of thy people be ever plentiful. Let my heart be fixed, and none either vain or worldly thoughts lodge within me this night. Quicken me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may draw near unto thee with

* *Here insert the mention of such particular sins which thou hast found thy self guilty of.* &c.

with a true heart, and be fervent in Spirit in thy ſervice; and with a good and honeſt heart receiving thy word, may underſtand and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience and unto perfection. Remember thou thy ſervants who are to diſpenſe thy Myſteries unto thy people: and eſpecially him upon whoſe teaching I am to wait. Pardon their ſins and frailties; Open their mouths, guide their minds and tongues, that they may deliver thy truths in the demonſtration of thy Spirit: and let thy work ſo proſper in their hands, that both themſelves and others may be built up in our moſt holy faith, to the perfecting thy Church, and the eternal glory of thy name

name thereby, through our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

Chap. VIII.

Of the true manner of sanctifying the Lords day.

Sect. 1.

Generally before I go to Church.

NOw as to my Closet duties upon this day, least the sole consideration of them should breed any neglect, forgetfulness, or disturbance of the duties to be performed in the family, and in the publick assembly, it will be most expedient to consider the whole duties of that day, both publick, private and secret, and set down each in their natural order.

First then, as upon no day we suppose

ſuppoſe our Chriſtian to be ſlothfull, ſo leaſt of all upon the Lords day, but to be up in a convenient ſeaſon, both himſelf, and, if any are under his charge, to ſee that they are ſo to. A convenient ſeaſon I call that, which, every mans health and occaſions being conſidered, will agree therewith, and leave time ſufficient for the diſcharge of the duties of the day. And ſuppoſing the publick ſervice to begin generally about nine of the clock, between ſix and ſeven will be a good hour: and all things being well ordered may conſiſt very well with moſt mens health and occaſions. And of this time, which paſſeth between my riſing and going to Church, if an hour and the odd parts be divided between the devotions of the family and the cloſet, ſo that half an hour be ſpent in the one, and the other half with the odd time in my cloſet, it may do very well; and the common occaſions of moſt houſes being conſidered, ſo much time may be allowed.

Part III. Chap. 8.

allowed: If so much cannot be afforded to this work, yet let some; and what day soever dispense with double prayers (I mean prayer in my closet, and prayer in my family) yet this day let me omit neither. It is a bad *omen* to begin the sanctification of the Lords day by the breach of my ordinary course of devotion, and an argument it is likely to be but negligently sanctified by me. Besides, many in my family may perhaps make no other preparation for the worship of God, than what they make by joyning in the family-devotions: it will be therefore the more necessary to make sure of thus much.

Sect. 2.

Of secret devotion in the Closet before going to Church.

NOw my private devotions will be for the main the same this day as others. Only in my Meditations it is to be remembred that I examine

examine my self touching my prepa- Part III.
rations for the solemn worship of Chap. 8.
God that day: and if any thing in my preparatory devotion be wanting (any sin unconfessed, unrepented of, &c.) in these my morning devotions, let that be done. And how compleat soever I may conceive my preparations to have been; yet let me not in my prayers in private that morning forget to send up some petitions for preparing and assisting grace, to the end I may more spiritually go through the duties of the Chap. 7.
day: for the doing of which I cannot now want directions, after a preparatory prayer already considered upon. And these my Closet devotions it will be necessary be first performed, for that they will very well fit me to perform my devotions in my family with more fervency.

Sect.

Part III. Chap. 8.

Sect. 3.

Of Private devotion in the family before going to Church. A digression touching what our devotion in the family is always to consist of.

THese therefore being done, and it being now somewhat above half an hour till the time we usually go to Church, I am to call all my family (except in extraordinary cases of sickness, *&c.*) together to prayer; at which time all of them, who that day can go to Church, which should be, as many as may be, should appear dressed as they are to go, that so, after the family devotions performed within a very short space we might altogether resort to the publick place of Gods worship.

Now if question be made what the devotions of the family are to consist of, the answer is. they cannot well consist of more or less than

than these two parts, *Reading* and *Prayer*. Part III. Chap. 8.

By *Reading* here I understand chiefly the reading the Word of God: and that it is the duty of the head of the family, either himself to read (or cause by some other to be read) the holy Scriptures in the hearing of the family; none can question, who considers those frequent Commands to the ancient people of God, to *teach their children the Law of God, and his judgements*, and dealings with them. Deut 4. 9. &c.

Now how they can be taught those things by their parents, from whom they never hear of them, cannot be understood: nor will any reasonable person think these commands fulfilled by the meer teaching their children the *Belief*, *Lords prayer*, and *ten Commandements* (though this must be most sure to be done) for we find of old they were to acquaint their children of Gods wonderful works in delivering them *out of the Land of Egypt*:

And

Part III. Chap. 8.

And in like manner we Christians to teach our children Gods Miracles of grace, in freeing us by his Son out of the bondage of sin; which, how it can be better done, than as God hath thought fit to teach it to the world, to wit by the Holy Scriptures, none will easily find out.

Now for the method to be observed in reading the Scriptures in our family, that which was above commended for use in the Closet may haply be most proper. And if I so order it, that I read the same portion of Scripture in my family, and in my closet, it may be much for my edification: the double reading it will set it deeper; both in my memory and in my understanding. But then, least I read faster and more in my family than in my closet, and for other reasons, it will be necessary that either my closet devotions go before my Family devotions, or that at least I so contrive my readings, that what I last read in my Closet,

set, I the next time read in my family

Instead of Meditation which was one part of my Closet devotion, if in my family I use to examine my people, what they have learnt or observed out of what hath been read; and where none takes notice of what is mainly observable, there suggest it to them, it may not be amiss, provided it be done soberly (without a long deal of prate and medling with curious matters) and without vain-glory.

The Prayers which I use in my family, except upon some very eminent occasions, may best be the Prayers of the Church. These are easie and best understandable: and the use of them in our families, will fit the plainest people in our family to use them with more devotion and understanding in the publick. Notwithstanding I confess my judgement in this case to be, that the *Injunction* of them doth not in strictness reach to private families, but there is a liberty

Part III. Chap. 8.

berty left; yet if we use that liberty only thus, so as freely and of our own accord to prefer the Prayers of the Church, I really judge, (generally) it will be the best. Some particular cases there may be, as when any great judgement lies upon a family, or the like, which may be admitted as exceptions to the general rule, and in which cases it may be expedient to use either other or more Prayers than those extant in our Church Liturgy.

The general course then of my family devotions will be this. First, he who prays begins with the last clause of that Exhortation thus: [*I pray and beseech you, as many as*, &c.] Then follows the Confession: [*Almighty and most Merciful.*] The Absolution is to be left out, except he be a Minister who read. Then comes the Lords Prayer and Versicles. Which being done, all rising, give attention to one reading a Psalm and a Chapter, or so much of them as the chief of the family shall

ſhall appoint. This being ended, if the Maſter of the family, or any by him deputed, will at that time examine, or briefly (as beforeſaid) inſtruct any touching what hath been read, here ſuch examination will moſt ſeaſonably come in: After which, he who reads the Prayers ſaying [*Let us pray*] all kneel down, and he begins with the Verſicles, *O Lord ſhew thy mercy*, &c. and ſo proceeds with the Prayers in their order, as they ſtand, morning and evening. Added before the prayer of St. *Chryſoſtom* may be, the Prayer or Collect for all conditions of men; or the General Thanksgiving; or in fit ſeaſons; the Ember week prayer, the Prayer for the High Court of Parliament; for ſuitable Weather, &c. with other Collects, at the diſcretion of the Maſter of the family.

Upon the Lords day in the morning, after the prayer for the Biſhops, Clergy and people, that is juſt before the Bleſſing, it may be convenient

Part III. Chap. 8.

ent to add, for preparing grace unto all, the prayer in the beginning of the Communion ſervice [*Almighty God to whom, &c.*] (or if there be any fitter in the Liturgy found) and that at the end of the Communion ſervice [*Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with, &c.*]

And in the evening upon the Lords day, after the ſame prayer for the Biſhops, *&c.* to add that prayer for fruitfulneſs by the means of grace, which is in the end of the Communion ſervice [*Grant, we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that, &c.*] Thus much then as to the order of devotion in the family, both ordinarily and upon the Lords day.

Sect. 4.

Of reſorting to the Church.

THeſe devotions both in my Family and Cloſet being thus performed, it will ſoon be time to appear before God in the Church. And I am to account no celebrating of

of the Lords day like to that in pub- Part. III
lick, with a full Congregation of Chap. 8.
Christian people. Hither therefore I early, with as many of my family as possibly (at least conveniently) I can, resort, both my self taking with me, if I can read, my Bible, and Common-prayer-book, and seeing that the rest of my family, who can read, do the same. And (especially if the way be long) I watch very narrowly over my self, and those of mine with me, that our discourse be not vain and idle, much less purely worldly, so as to unfit our hearts: and as to my private self the same care am I to have of my thoughts. Seasonable it will be to think of the happiness which I enjoy, in that I come into the Courts of God, and feed upon the fat things of his House, and to praise God in my heart that I have such freedome of access unto him: In which case many happy and proper Ejaculations may I furnish my self with out of holy *David*'s Psalmes.

Sect. 5.

Of due behaviour in the Church.

BEing come to the place, which is holy to Gods worship, I enter it with all reverence, bare, if my Sex so require, remembring, that though God be present every where, yet is he more specially in the places where his people are worshipping him: and any postures of reverence, that I use there, are acts of worship unto his unseen but present Majesty, and therefore cannot but be mistaken very much, if judged by any superstitious. Having therefore orderly taken my place, I should (not out of custom but devotion) bow to God my knees, and beg his gracious presence and blessing towards me, and the congregation of his people that shall there meet that day, which I may do in this or the like form.

O Lord, who though thou dwelleſt not in Temples made with hands, yet haſt promiſed to meet and bleſs thy people wherever thou haſt recorded thy Name; be pleaſed to be graciouſly preſent to thy ſervant here worſhipping before thee, and to the Congregation of thy people, which ſhall here aſſemble themſelves this day for thy worſhip. Pardon every one, who hath not prepared himſelf according to the preparation of the Sanctuary. Quicken us all for thy Names ſake; teach us to do thy Will, and build us up in our moſt holy faith, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

Part III. Chap. 8.

I know there are ſome who object againſt this practice, but I could never yet ſee any reaſon in their pretenſions.

This therefore being done, if the Congregation be not yet fully met, it is not for me to imploy my ſelf in vain diſcourſe with any of my neighbours: but either to meditate on ſomewhat which may be ſeaſonable, or, if I can, to read.

And it may not be improper, till I am well verſt in it, and know my duty therein well, to read the Church Liturgy, Rubrick (that is the directions which are mingled with the prayers, for their uſe) and all; taking one day ſome part of it, and another day another, till I have gone through it wholly. By this means, diſcreetly uſed, I ſhall be able more readily to joyn with the publick in the uſe thereof: But if the Congregation be fully met, and Service beginning or begun, I am to yield all poſſible attention, remembring God requires my whole man,

all

all mine heart, ſoul and mind, yea, and my very body too: Wherefore ſo am I to place and order even that (I mean my very body) as the worſhip of God, and the Churches inſtructions for the worſhip of that God, require; *kneeling, ſtanding and anſwering* ſtill whereſoever I ought. Nor am I to cenſure any thing if I do not yet underſtand its uſe: for by ſo much as I do underſtand, I cannot but in a good meaſure ſee the wiſdome and pious intentions of the Church: By thoſe anſwers, which I with the reſt of the people are to make, I find my ſelf much quickened, and my wandring heart many times call'd home; the uſe therefore of theſe, as I ſhould not omit, ſo ſhould the benefit which I have found by them, be an argument to me, to conform my ſelf to every other practice enjoyned; not doubting, but that all of them will in the end have as good an effect as this upon me.

During the celebration of Gods

Part III. Chap. 8.

worſhip, if my mind at any time be run away from my work, I am, as ſoon as ever I perceive it, ſecretly to check my ſelf, to call it home, and in my heart ſay, *Lord pardon and help thy ſervant*, or ſome ſuch thing, and, in a word, to imploy it as fully as I can about my buſine s, remembring not only how diſpleaſing it is to God, but how unprofitable to my ſelf to draw near unto him with my body only, and honour him with my lips, when my ſoul is afar off.

Whatſoever I hear of the Word, read or preached, I muſt remember all along to apply unto my ſelf: not carping at, or cenſuring the Preacher, but taking all in the beſt ſenſe, (*Poſſibly, it may be long of my ſins he did no better, or ſo ill*) nor looking ſo much how it concerns others, as my own particular ſtate and manners. And if there be any thing which more neerly toucheth and concerneth me, that let me be ſure by ſome means or other to keep or

ſet

set home upon my memory: perhaps there may be some place of Scripture cited to confirm, explain, or illustrate it; let me note that place, and the being able to find it, may, in case I am forgetful, bring the matter to my remembrance. Part III. Chap. 8.

The exercises of divine worship being all ended, I am with the same reverence to depart the Church with which I entred it (not rudely, hastily and disorderly, as the common manner of the multitude is) courteously saluting any of my neighbours, which I have occasion to salute, and that with inward love and good will: remembring that the ancient Christians had such an usage at their Assemblies, as *the Kiss of Charity*; it is but Christian therefore for me to use a charitable and chearful Salutation of any of my Christian neighbours. Rom. 6.6

Sect. 6.

Of due behaviour between the Morning and Evening Service.

MY return with my family home ſhould be with the ſame gravity and care, with which was my paſſage to the Church: my talk rather of what I heard or learnt, than of any worldly matter, except neceſſary occaſions enforce the contrary. And being come home, one of my firſt buſineſſes ſhould be to ſtep aſide into my Cloſet, if poſſibly I can, and there, according as I have found my ſelf affected, to apply my ſelf unto God. If I have been awakened to any duty, raiſed to any hopes of Gods favour, ſtrengthened in any of my holy reſolutions, informed of any thing touching which I was ignorant, or the like, there briefly to bleſs God for it: if I have been dull and improfitable, there to bewail it; both which may be done after this or ſome ſuch ſort.

I Bless thee, O Lord my God, for the comforts of thy House; for thy awakenings of me to my duty; for any softenings of my heart, and sense of thy love, or hopes of enjoying thee hereafter. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, who am a vain, hard-hearted, sinful wretch of my self, but to thy holy Name be the praise. Now encrease, I beseech thee, this thy goodness to me; and confirm me in thy Grace evermore: Let me grow in the knowledge, fear and love of thee; and any impressions thereof, which I have this day received, suffer me not to loose; but enable me to bring forth fruit unto perfection, to the glory of thy

Part III. Chap. 8.

Name, through Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Mediator. *Amen.*

If this prayer may not suit with my condition, it may be presumed, that as I have knowledge enough to see it doth not, so I have abilities enough, in some tolerable way, to represent and bewail before God my barrenness, heedlesness, worldliness, carnality, and whatever other great distempers I find in my soul! which accordingly I ought briefly to do. And this being done, let me recollect my self, and view over in my mind those severals, which I have that day learned or been affected with: for this will further imprint them upon my memory. Less than a quarter of an hour may suffice hereto: and though haply sometimes I may see occasion to allow more, yet so much sure I may afford at all times.

Having thus fastened upon my spirit

spirit my spiritual gains, I now de- Part III.
part to my company for the neces- Chap. 8.
ry refreshment of my body, which this day was not appointed to abridge me of. Let me therefore be chearful, and eating my meat in singleness of heart rejoyce before my God: but let not my joy by any means be wanton, idle, vain, or intemperate.

Of the rest of the time which passeth between the publick duties of the day, the imployment ought to be sacred, at least wholesome, and such which may not indispose me for the remaining part of the daies work: and hereof much care is to be had.

First, As to my discourse: touching which, if it be the Apostles Precept, at all times to be observed, that *our speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt*, certainly more specially ought it to be such on this day. And though it cannot be accounted absolutely sinful to converse about secular matters of concernment, if Col. 4. 6.

occasion

Part III. Chap. 8. occaſion ſo require, yet 1. To be wholly taken up with theſe cannot but argue a greater care of this world than ſenſe of Chriſtianity, if ſo be there be any truth in that Speech of him who is Infallible: *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* And 2. To be needleſly medling with ſuch affairs, or idlely buſying our ſelves about other mens actions and concernes (which are the ordinary ſubject of mens diſcourſes after dinner on the Lords day) is at the beſt but a mixture of worldlineſs and vanity: and it is made the character of naughty men, that *their tongues walk through the earth.*

Mat. 12. 34.

Pſa. 73. 9.

Secondly, As to my actions care too is to be taken: It is not queſtionleſs unlawful upon due occaſion; that is, on account of mine own or others neceſſity, or conſiderable conveniency, to put mine hands to an ordinary action, as is evident from our Saviours both Doctrine and Practice: But (as aboveſaid of

Luk. 13. 15.

of diſcourſe, ſo now of buſineſs) to be needleſly imployed in worldly matters and ordinary work, cannot but be ſome kind of profanation of the day, as being contrary to its ſanctification, that is, the ſpending it to other uſes and ends, than thoſe for which it was ſet apart. And albeit in this caſe no certain perpetual rule is to be ſet, (the conditions of men being various) but each mans Chriſtian diſcretion and piety ought to mete out to himſelf what he in his own conſcience, and in the fear of God conſidering his occaſions, judgeth fit (in which we are not one to judge another) notwithſtanding I cannot think that man takes ſuch care of himſelf as he ought, or is duly cautious of indiſpoſing his heart for his duty, who can conſtantly ſuffer all this time, between Morning and Evening ſervice, to paſs over with him without any thing of devotion, either in his privacy or family, or juſt as the ſame time paſſeth over every day. This

Part III. Chap. 8.

I say, cannot be to sanctifie the day, because not to separate it from common, and to use it to distinct ends.

Soon therefore after dinner ended amongst all the family, it is meet that I call the younger sort and set them to the learning their Catechisme. and as to the Elder, if I suspect any of them to be apt to trifle away their time, let them be kept in my presence; and if all of them be able, let them read by course somewhat out of the Scripture, or, some plain and honest book; if all be not, then such as can.

Sect. 7.

Of resorting to Evening service.

WHen it is now almost time to resort to Evening service, let all be called together to the end that all may orderly repair with me to the publick Assembly. And it may not be amiss (but right edifying) if some one person read a Psalm suitable

ſuitable to the preſent undertaking of going to worſhip God (ſuch as is the lxxxiv. or the cxix. one or two parts of it being taken at a time, as occaſion or time ſhall ſerve) to which reading all ought reverently to attend. And this being done, let the ſame rules and directions, which were given touching going to Church in the Morning, be obſerved in the Evening, and all as before reſort to the publick worſhip. Which if they do, I and my family are now a ſecond time attentively and reverently placed before God in his Houſe of Prayer; where my carriage ought to be the ſame, as is before directed to. And ſurely unleſs I and my houſe appear thus the ſecond time before God, I cannot account my ſelf duly to ſanctifie the Lords day, I have done it onely by halfes. The Church was never in a ſetled condition, but it had the Evening as well as the Morning ſacrifice; *Veſpers* as well as *Mattins*.

If therefore any thing ſhould ſo fall

Part III. Chap. 8.

fall out, that I or mine are hindred from the second part of the publick duties of the day, it ought to be my grief and sorrow, *Psal.* 42. 4.

Sect. 8.

Of the duties after return from Evening service.

MY departure from the Church and my retierment as soon as I come home for about a quarter of an hour, or as I see occasion, should be after the same sort, as in the former part of the day. Which being done, it will be expedient to come amongst my people, and see that all things are wisely ordered; that so, sometime before night, the Devotions of the family may be performed. In the mean time, both I my self, and as many of the family as can be spared from necessary services, are free to our private devotions. Onely if there are any triflers, let them and the younger sort be dealt with, as after dinner, that is, kept, where

where the people moſt commonly ſit, reading and attending to the Word of God; at leaſt for ſome certain ſpace. Let them not ſpend their time as they do ordinarily: for *the Lords day ſhould look with another face than common days all the day long.* Part III. Chap. 8.

This care being taken of my ſelf and family, I ſee not but my Chriſtian liberty permits me any honeſt refreſhment, ſuch as may be walking forth in my garden, in the fields or open air. Onely let me obſerve theſe cautions. 1. That my walk be ſome ſuch as *Iſaac*'s Evening walk was, that my Meditations be good. Unqueſtionably I ſhall not find the fields an unfit place for good thoughts: There are many in the world, whom the very breathing the free air, the beholding the glorious light of Heaven, the paſſing clouds, the verdant earth and ſmiling face of all things, transports into a rapture of devotion, affects very much with the admiration of the Creator of Gen. 24. 63.

Part III. Chap. 8.

of all things, makes too to long for the time, when either they ſhall aſcend above them all, or ſee them paſs away, and dwell ever with their God, beholding his face without any ſuch interpoſitions. And with much advantage may a man ſpend an hour thus, mixing often prayers or ejaculations with theſe his thoughts. 2. Another caution I ſhould obſerve is, That I return ſo early, as that neither my Devotions in my Cloſet, nor in my family, may be omitted. And truly moſt convenient will it be, that my own private devotions (which, being that I look on my ſelf bound to on other dayes, I cannot this day omit) be performed before that ſupper, which I take: for then ſhall I be freſheſt; then will what I have learnt that day be better in my memory, than after the diverſions, which my ſupper and company may cauſe. Beſides that, the performance of them will have fixed and prepared my ſpirit againſt any ſuch diverſions, and for the performance

performance of devotion in the family. Which practice too on other evenings may not be improper, but possibly, by reason of my constitution, convenient if not necessary.

Now as to what I am this evening to perform in my Closet, it is the same, for the most part, as at other times. My course of reading must be the same: onely if so be that I see fit the portion which I read larger. My Meditations, (besides what is every days task) upon what I read, may take in a view of my carriage that day; an enquiry what I have learnt; a considering so as to affect my self with it; and a setting down a resolution to endeavour in all my wayes a practice of it. My prayers may take in some new Confessions, [of my *unprofitableness*, *hardheartedness*, *unsetledness*] petitions [for *pardon*, *memory to retain*, *and grace to perform* what I have learned] Thanksgivings [for any *quickenings of heart*, *resolution of holiness*, *any instruction or improvement*

Part III. Chap. 8.

provement of my Christian knowledge, *&c.*] all suitable to what in my Meditations I have found mine estate to be: for the inserting or putting in of which, I shall easily find in my usual prayers fit places.

My Closet devotions being thus performed, time it will now be for me and my family to take what Evening meal we use: which being done in some convenient time before we go to bed (which ought not for many reasons to be too late) if I am a pious Christian I cannot but look upon my self bound to shut up the day in my family with some such devotions as I begun it with. Touching which some directions have been already given, as to Reading and Prayer: and it is onely to be added that I am to make some inquiry severally into those, who are under my charge, touching their improvements that day; to help out and instruct the ignorant; to rebuke, and that sharply, the negligent and heedless; to encou-

rage

rage the careful as my Christian discretion shall see meet: the properest place for which, will be either before the prayers begin, or just after the reading of the Scriptures, so that the family may be dismissed and the day ended with prayers.

PART

Part IV.

Of most solemn Retirement into the Closet for Humiliation.

Chap. I.

An Account of what is to be treated of, particularly in this part.

MY most solemn retirement into my Closet, and that for which the place is most principally designed, is upon such days or times, which I set apart to humble my

my self for my sins before God, by Fasting and Prayer and Mourning, and all acts of Contrition. Part IV. Chap. I.

And truly if the ordinary Fasting days of the Church were duly by all observed, all, that our present design would seem to call for, were, to deliver the manner of their private observation, that is, the particular duties to be on them performed. But forasmuch as most men keep them ordinarily no otherwise, than by a little change of diet, taking perhaps fish &c. for flesh, and feeding neither more sparingly, nor much less deliciously, than they do on other days, and so make them indeed no fasting days, we must consider both of the *Setting* apart of days for private fasting, and of their *Observation* when set apart. But first of all it will be necessary to spend few thoughts upon the nature and ends of *Fasting*.

Chap.

Chap. II.

Of the Nature and Ends of Fasting.

BY Fasting here is meant the *Religious abstaining from our lawful food.* Lawful food at present we will account that, which, according to the common practice of sober and discreet persons of our rank and quality, is neither too *much* nor too *dainty* for us. For we may account a man intemperate in his feeding, as well by being too delicate and fine, and eating constantly on things which are fit chiefly for persons above his degree, as by eating overmuch. Now not all abstaining from this my lawful food is that *Fasting*, which is here intended: for I may abstain for my healths sake, or through business, or (by some accidents) upon necessity, and

and all (it may very well be) without sin, and yet not fast as fasting signifies a duty, or an act acceptable to God: but it must be a Religious abstaining, which I can duely call Fasting, as at present that name is used: Now it will be best discerned to be *Religious*, by the *ends* which design to my self therein, and by my *imployment* of my self upon such my Fasting days. Part. IV. Chap. 2.

First, as to the ends and designs of him who abstains or fasts Religiously. The chief of them are See Dr. *Hammon*, *Pract.* Catech. Lib 3 Sect. 4.

1. Devotion, or the performance of Religious exercises: when I fast, that I may have more leisure and be fresher for *Reading*, *Meditation*, and *Prayer*.

2. Mortification: when I fast to tame my flesh, to keep under and beat down my body, that it may be in due obedience to the commands of God and reason.

3. Liberality: when I fast to deal my bread unto the hungry, and either deprive my self or feed more

Part IV. Chap. 2.

slenderly, that I may have the more wherewith to relieve others.

4. Sympathising with the sufferings of others: when I fast out of a fellow feeling of the afflictions of Gods people, commiserating their condition, and, through an abundance of charity, desiring as it were to partake with them in their sufferings.

5. Exercising my self to the obedience of Christs commands: when I fast out of self-denial, and (when I both would and could eat) by fasting as by one particular act of obedience to that general command of denying my self, *exercise my self unto godliness.*

6. Diverting or removing Gods wrath, and expressing my sorrow and humiliation for sin: when Gods wrath either resting upon my country or friends, or self, or hanging over any of our heads, I fast and deprecate it, and beg pardon of those evils, which have brought it into such misery and danger.

7.

7. An holy revenge or punishment of my self: when having repented of some sin, for which I am holily angry with my self, I choose thus to punish and chastise my self for my former, (it may be) luxury, wantonness, or the like. Part IV. Chap. 2. 2 Cor. 7. 11.

When I say out of any of these intentions, or with these designs I abstain from my lawful meat, I then fit in the sense that fasting is now taken: for this is (thus far) Religiously to abstain; and no doubt, but such abstaining is acceptable unto God, if all be as right as my intentions, that is, if suitable *performances or devotions* be added, which is the second point constituting a Religious Fast, and touching which, rules will anon be considered, when the nature of fasting is a little further looked into, and it is evident that it is a duty, and no such needless matter as men usually seem to take it for, if we may judge of what they think by what they do.

Chap. III.

That Fasting is a Christian Duty.

NOw that none either suspicion touching its necessity or excuse for its neglect may be left, it will be expedient to consider what Evidence may be brought that Fasting is a Christian duty.

1. Indeed there needeth little more to be urged for the proving it a duty, besides the recollection and summing up those excellent ends to which it serves and conduceth. No doubt but to humble my self for my sins, to pray earnestly for pardon, and for the turning away of Gods wrath are duties; No doubt but to keep under my body and make it subject to relieve the poor, to sympathize with the *afflictions of Joseph*, are duties: now to all these is fasting

ing a means, and of ſome of them (beſides) an expreſſion. No doubt but to deny my ſelf, and to take upon my ſelf an holy revenge for my former extravagancies, are duties: Now of theſe is Faſting a part. It may therefore hence ſufficiently be concluded a duty. Part IV. Chap. 3.

2. A further evidence of the ſame I take it to be, that Faſting is by our Saviour, in that Sermon of his upon the Mount, which delivers to us the ſum of the Chriſtian Law, or rule of Evangelical duties, ranked with Prayer and Almes-giving; (which are undoubted duties) and reſcued from the Phariſaical abuſes of it, the true manner of it being inſinuated: Inſomuch that it may be juſtly demanded, how comes it to ſtand in the Chriſtian law? to what end needed its practice to be vindicated from corruption, and aſſerted as it is by Chriſt, to its purity, if it were not a Chriſtian duty? Beſides Mat. 6. 2, 6, 15. compated.

3. We find God in his ſeaſon cal-

Part IV. Chap. 3. ling for it, of old by his prophet *Joel*, *Sanctifie a Fast, call an Assembly*, Joel 2.15 which place though it intend a publick Fast, yet when the case shall be so with a private person, as the Prophet supposeth it with that people, it will by *Analogy*, and in reason hold of a private one, and yet it is evident our Saviour in St, *Matthew* spoke of those private Fasts, which every one is by him supposed to consecrate unto God. Who knows not that the *Afflicting of the soul* (touching which we meet with so many commands, and such frequent mention in the old Testament) doth mainly intend fasting? And as to the new Testament, further yet; though our Saviour once tells us, the season for his Disciples fasting was Mat. 9.15 not then come, *while the Bridegroom was with them*, yet at the same time he tells us, its season would not be long too, *and then they should fast*.

4. Again, the constant sense of the world, and of all the Saints of God

God in all ages (amongſt whom by how much ſoever any have been more zealous, by ſo much the more hath he been in the exerciſe of faſting) is an argument (no whit contemptible) of its being a duty. Not onely the Saints under the Law faſted, and the Phariſee too twice a week, but the devout Chriſtians have ever been to us enſamples hereof. And, Part IV. Chap. 3.

5. (Which ſets it off with more advantage) we find not onely the commendation of them for this practice, but the recompenſe of it with many ſignal bleſſings recorded in Scripture: which recompence God doth not uſe to give to will-worſhip. Thus we find *Anna* commended for her continuing in the Temple day and night, *ſerving God with Faſtings and Prayers.* And it is obſervable, that *faſting* is there reckoned as one part of her *ſerving God.* That bleſſed viſion, which led *Cornelius* to the knowledge of Chriſt was vouchſafed to him upon Luke 2. 36. Act. 10.

Part IV. Chap. 3.

a day when he had fasted till about the ninth hour (which is with us three a clock) and then too we find him not at meat, but prayer.

All which cannot but enforce that though it be not *always* and indispensibly a duty, as is Faith, Repentance, Charity, and such others; yet is it as far a duty as any thing can be that is not required absolutely and for it self, and that therefore whensoever there is occasion for it (and no Christian can be long without due occasions requiring it) it is to be performed; and being so, if it should be performed in manner of a free-will offering, or oftner than in strictness the Christian might seem to have need of it, yet if it be done as it should be, it is likely to be acceptable to God.

But this makes it seasonable to enquire how often a Christian is to fast.

Chap.

Chap. IV.

How often a Christian is to fast.

IN answer whereunto it must be said, that no certain or constant rule, as to all persons can or may be given herein: nor will the times of fasting be the same to all, some men having more need, others less (if not need yet) opportunity. We are assured by the ends to which it serves, that many mens particular conditions (which haply leave them none other means to mortifie the flesh but this) make it a duty very necessary for them to be much in. On the other side, those who ever feed sparingly and temperately, and have an evener constitution, less inclined to carnality and inordinate affections, than have other men, seem to have least need of this taming discipline. And those whose labours

Part IV. Chap. 4.

are daily and hard, and whose life is servile, many times neither have so much need, nor so much opportunity of fasting, as have those whose life is easier. Yet forasmuch as it is (according to what hath been above insinuated) a piece of *Afflicting a mans soul*, and so a necessary piece of contrition and repentance (which hath commonly somewhat of *indignation* against a mans self in it) there is none who can think himself wholly dispensed with for it, or to have no need at all of it. But I see every mans conscience and Christian discretion must in the fear of God set to himself the rule, how often he is to fast: for that every one best knows his own needs, and it would be very sinful in some not to use more strict and oftner fastings than others; and some on the contrary must be very injurious to themselves, should they use so much fasting as others (if they duely consider their leisure and condition) cannot but think themselves in duty bound

bound to. This is the sum of what in general may be positively determined as to all. Yet it is worthy our consideration, and may be a guide to particular persons to remember. Part IV. Chap. 4.

First, that is is a practice of very great antiquity to *fast twice a week*, and was in use as is evident before our Saviours days, and by him not censured in the Pharisee upon any other account, than because he was proud and conceited of it, using to reflect upon it in ostentation of his own holiness, and scorn of others. And it is a very worthy note of St. *Chrysostomes*, that we should onely *avoid the Pharisees pride, but not neglect his performances*, as on the other side, *forsake the Publicans sins but retain his humility*. There is also a constitution, which although perhaps it pretend to more authority and antiquity than it ought, yet must be acknowledged to be ancient and not unreasonable, that we should fast *Wednesdays* and *Fri-*

Part IV. Chap. 4.

daies becauſe *on the one the Lord was betrayed, and on the other crucified:* and it is beyond controverſie that the primitive Chriſtians uſed to have their ſolemn aſſemblies upon thoſe days, not much leſs conſtant than upon the Lords days.

Conſtitute a Clem: Roman, collect. Lib. 5. Cap. 15.

Secondly; that if this courſe be not always to be uſed (which yet I know not what ſhould hinder, except a man want leiſure) yet at certain ſeaſons, as in *Lent* and *Ember weeks*, the commands and cuſtom of the Church will engage me to as much as this amounts to, if not to more. And he to whom the commands of our preſent, and continued practice of the Catholique Church in devotionals ſignifie nothing, is ſurely a man of a ſtrange humourous ſanctity.

Laſtly, it is out of queſtion that there is no Chriſtian can walk ſtrictly and keep a good conſcience towards God and man, who hath not *his ſolemn ſet days for the performing that great and weighty duty of humi-*

Dr. *Hammons* Pract. Catech. Lib. 2. Sect: 3.

humiliation, in calling himself to an account for all his wayes, and confessing his sins more particularly before God: and those daies should not be too slow in their returns [that is, too seldom] *least his soul should be too deep in arrears* [that is, least there should be such a long score of his sins unrepented of, that he think it an infinite and endless work to repent of them] *and so be loath to come to account at all. It is very reasonable therefore for every man and woman of any tolerable leisure to set apart one day in a week for this purpose, or if the whole day, or any other part of it may not be spared from the business of his calling, yet the dinner time that day may be borrowed from eating, and thus more usefully imployed without disturbance to the affairs or injury to the health of any ordinary person.* I do not say that this day ought alwayes to be one and the same: it may be one week one day, and the next another, according as my occasions will best bear: nay even after

Part IV. Chap. 5.

after I have appointed it, upon unexpected events, it may undoubtedly be altered without sin, but wholly neglected it cannot be without a sinful omission, except upon some urgent, or more than ordinary business.

Chap. V.

Of the Preparatory acts for Private Fasting daies.

THe worship of God is ever best celebrated, when some kind of preparation is made for it: It will be meet therefore that somewhat I do by way of preparation for my private fasts.

And one piece of Preparation as well for these daies as for the Lords day it self (though indeed somewhat remote, or afar off) it will be, to be diligent other daies in my calling, and well to husband both my time

time and estate. For if he, who hath not by his six daies labour made such provision for himself and his, as that he may be without care of providing upon the seventh day, will scarce rest that seventh day unto God without distraction (as seems to be suggested to us by those words [*Six daies shalt thou labour*] being put into the fourth Commandement) much less will he be able to allow himself constantly more time in a week than a seventh day comes to, to wit some part of every day, and a considerable part besides of one of the six daies (which is to be his fast) to the service of God. I would therefore have every man not to incumber himself in this world more than he needs must. We should learn to know when we have enough, and allow our selves some part of our time to enjoy as well as all to get. But this is preparation very far off. Part IV. Chap. 5.

The first act of more immediate preparation for these my fasting daies

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daies will be, prudently to contrive, upon foresight and consideration of my weeks business, what day or daies they are, in which I can best spare time for this work: and those daies, or that day will be the fittest to be pitched upon, in which I may the most freely converse with God without the disturbance, which much business necessarily brings. Besides the time spent in my ordinary course of devotions, which are not upon my fasts to be omitted, under pretence of making amends for them, or running them up into my Penitentiary performances. I cannot upon those daies when I allow least, allow less than two hours and upwards to the peculiar work of my fasts. So much time therefore, at the least, I say, I must resolve such a day to devote.

Which being resolved upon, it will be fit (as a second act of my more immediate preparation) in the devotions of the evening before, to spend a petition or two in my prayers

ers to God, that he would by his gracious Spirit *prepare* me for the work which I intend the next day, *softning* my heart, and *giving me to understand my errours*, that I may duly lament them, and truly amend them; which Petitions I may easily see a fit place to insert in my prayers. And the day being come, unto my morning devotions it will be expedient to add some such short prayer, as this which follows.

O Lord who seest the purposes of all hearts, and hast been privy to the intentions of thy servant touching calling himself this day to an account of his wayes, and humbling himself before thee for all his transgressions; Be thou in mercy present to me by the preventings and assistance of thy grace, that I may with a true heart and con-

contrite spirit perform what I intend. Grant that no worldly cares or business may so take off my mind from thee, but that I may be able forthwith to return, and without distraction to employ my whole soul in my designed devotions; to the glory of thy Name, my own amendment and comfort here, and everlasting blessedness hereafter in and through thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

And lastly, my morning devotions being thus finished, until the time come that I have resolved to retire I must endeavour to converse and behave my self in my ordinary affairs so warily as that nothing may discompose, disorder, or disturb me; no worldly design too much possess my thoughts, according as above I have prayed.

Chap.

Chap. VI.

The order of Humiliation or Penitentiary Devotions.

Sect. 1.

The entrance into the work.

THat time being now come, which I appointed to spend with God in my Closet, I must religiously observe mine appointment: For albeit the resolve was only private, and never proceeded without my own breast or closet, yet hath God taken notice of it, and it stands on record in his omniscience; and by breaking these my private and (as happily I may judge) less material resolutions, I shall soon learn to break my word and vows in other matters, both with God and man.

Coming

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Coming therefore at my time appointed into my Closet, I reverently kneel down before God, and having the sense of his presence, and all-seeing eye upon mine heart, humbly begin in some such short prayer, as is this which follows.

I Am come, O Lord, into thy presence, upon work, which no one hath more need to do than my self, to consider my wayes, and repent of my sins, and turn to thee. But I have an hard heart, not apt to relent; and dry eyes, such, at least, which seldom shed tears for my sins. O that thou would'st bow the Heavens, and come down, and melt my soul in such godly sorrow, which might work repentance not to be repented of. Open mine eyes and help me to see into

into mine heart: Bring my sins to my remembrance, and set them in order before me, that an holy shame and confusion may cover my face for them, and thou beholding my contrition maist accept it, and both pardon me, and assist me hereafter by thy grace, that I may live more godlily, righteously, and soberly in this present world, and attain unto blessedness with thy self in the world to come, through the merits of Christ Jesus my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

Sect.

Sect. 2.

Of Reading, so as to fit my self for Self-examination.

SOme such supplication being with all my heart made unto God, I may haply find it not to be alwayes the best course forthwith to fall upon the examination of my self: For, for this I shall be the fitter when awakened and made more attentive to my self by some other exercise. It may be proper therefore to spend an hour in the reading some honest practical Book, which treateth severally of those duties which we owe both to God, others and our selves; to wit, upon that particular Book, which knowing to be very good, I have chosen and singled out to my self to read and practice, such as are the never enough commended Doctor *Hammond's Practical Catechisme*, or (if that seem to any too difficult) that no

no less excellent than plain and truly learned Book, *The whole Duty of Man*, (for the Author of which, our whole Church owes praises unto God, and if he be yet alive, prayers.) And in my reading hereof, I must endeavour to read:

First, with understanding: so that it is not so much the repeating to my self the words, as considering and digesting the substance of them, which I must account reading of them. I must therefore read and study the Book as Schollars do their books, and if there be any material thing which I do not understand, mark it, so that I may inform my self, by advising with some more able person than my self.

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Secondly, I must read all with application to my self, remembring that all this concerns me, and endeavouring to see how it concerns me, whether I perform the duty I read of as I should, or how I neglect it, &c.

By this means, taking upon every

of

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of my fasting daies a part, my Book will in convenient season be read over: which when it is, it must not be thrown aside, but read through again and again, with the same diligence, till I am perfect in it. Nor ought the third or fourth reading of a good, profitable and practical Treatise, to be tedious or unpleasant to me: for that Christian duties are not new, but have been, and alwayes will be the same, and multitude of books do but confound plain heads. All wise men know, that to make a mans self master of one good book is better than to have slightly read an hundred, which were not either throughly understood or digested. To keep therefore thus to one good book, which may instruct me of the sum of my Christian duty, till I have fully made it mine own, is my most edifying course.

Sect.

Sect. 3.

Of Self-examination, and the view of our life.

THis my Exercise of reading being over, it will be seasonable now to fall to the examination of my self touching my sins. And here I shall find a very good help of the former work of reading, especially after some considerable use of it; when I am once come to know my moral duties: for certain it is, *No man can see what he hath done amiss, or what he hath left undone* (which two heads, of *Omission* and *Commission* contain under them all actual sins) but he seeth what he should have done. Now this duty of Self-examination, a man may be supposed either to be a stranger in, and little to have practised, or else to have been much in it, and to be throughly versed in his heart and life.

He who is a stranger to it, hath

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unquestionably more work to do than the other. That he may therefore do his business throughly, he must begin with those very first years which he can remember, and trace sin from his infancy, through his youth, to his riper and present years. He must see what Devil first entred him, I mean, what sin first seized him, how they have grown up and continued with him. Singularly useful in this case will be those Heads of Self-examination in that admirable honest book, *The whole Duty of Man*, in the Devotional part annext thereto, with the use and application of which also shewed at the end of those heads. But this will be too long a work for an hour or two. Such a person therefore had need to set apart whole daies for this purpose, till he hath a little recovered himself, and set his accounts straiter with God. Yet must he not, while he is enquiring after unknown or forgotten sins, neglect to repent of his fresh

and known transgressions. If therefore so it is, that for the present he cannot recollect himself, and make a diligent search into the whole course of his life, yet must be confess and bewail what he knows of himself, and together acknowledge how much he is in arrears, which he hath forgotten, or at present doth not see, and for all humbly beg mercy. But this not so, as wholly to put off further enquiry: but having this Fast examined himself touching so many days or moneths (according as his leisure finds his thoughts work) upon the next Fast to proceed farther, and so do the next still farther, till he have come home to his present age. Now as this sifting of my life, if I can, it will be very useful to me, and much further a distinct Repentance, to use my Pen, and through each year set down my sins: By this means I shall be able much better to consider them, and so, both know more of my self, and of the deceitful wayes, which sin hath to gain upon me.

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And because as I owe to God Confession and repentance of my sins, so I owe also acknowledgment and thanks for his Mercies, therefore in this enquiry, it will be necessary to observe Gods remarkable Mercies and deliverances to me, recording these also year by year, as my sins.

Thus will the sight of his Mercies aggravate my sins, and encrease my repentance; and the sight of my sins, parallel with his mercies, commend his goodness and inhance my thankfulness; both which are singular benefits.

And because even afflictions have their use, and are to be accounted for; if therefore I find any considerable adversity or cross, with which God hath exercised me, this also is to be registred as the former. If it did me good, I owe to God thanks for it: if not, I owe repentance for being incorrigible.

Being thus come to my present time, it will become me not to run in

in arrears again, but every Fast day still to make my accounts even; and to that purpose to take care, as aforesaid, and these my Fasts be not too seldom.

Supposing therefore, that I am a person who have so far practised self-examination, as that I have formerly taken account of all my life, That, which I shall have chiefly to enquire into, upon each return of these my fasting dayes, will be,

First, what new sins or commissions I have been guilty of since my last day of accouuting.

Secondly, What neglects: especially, if I have formerly made any vows or new engagements to God, how I have observed or slighted them.

Thirdly, In what posture or temper my heart hath continued, and at present is; whether soft, tender, penitent and in awe of God; or whether dull, careless, insensible, or otherwise out of order and prone to its old lusts.

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Lastly, How the providences of God have carried towards me since thence; what mercies received, what afflictions sent upon me, and what hath been my carriage answerably. These heads of examination if I cannot remember, I must here turn to, and put the question to my self as to every point particularly. And whatever I find more remarkable, let it be registred in mine Accomptal (so I call that Paper-book in which I use to keep account of my life and spiritual state) whereof, as is aboveſaid, I shall find singular advantage in my succeeding time.

Sect. 4.

Of the Endeavour of godly sorrow. How to work our selves to it.

SIn is not such a thing, the knowledge of which is desirable for it self, but onely in order to somewhat else, which it is apt to beget, to wit,

Godly

Godly sorrow and repentance. My sins therefore being thus known, I am to set my self about the sorrowing for them, and repenting of them.

And to godly sorrow the readiest course will be, more fully to fix my thoughts upon the sins, of which in my examination of my self I have found my self guilty, to look upon them, so as that *mine eye may affect my heart*, my attent consideration of them may move and grieve me, as it ought. To this purpose I am to consider particularly;

First, the foulness of my particular sins in themselves and in their own nature, how vile they make me, how unable I should be to look men in the face, if they knew all these unworthy acts by me, which I do of my self, and God far better then my self: how vile therefore must they needs render me in his holy Eye.

Secondly, The several Aggravations which they admit; the chief of which, and those which are aptest

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to affect me, I may take to be those which follow.

1. Against how great light and how clear knowledge of Gods will I have sinned. I knew such and such actions to be sinful, when yet I ventred upon them.

2. Against how many checks of conscience I committed them. Did not my own heart at that very instant smite me, telling me of the wrath of God and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things?

3. Against how many engagements and obligations to the contrary have I sinned. 1. My own vows and covenant both in baptisme and since. 2. Gods mercies and forbearance, which should have invited and lead me to repentance. 3. Gods judgements and heavy hand many times upon me, which should have taught me righteousnes. 4. Had I no hinderances in the way, which I broke through? It may be Gods holy providence cast somewhat in,

which

which did a while retard my commission of the sin, and, if I had not been desperately bent upon it, might have diverted me; and dasht the temptation. All these were engagements to the contrary, and have not I broke through many of them? Part IV. Chap. 6.

4. Was not I the tempter and Devil to my self in them? Did not I set my self on work, without Satans incitation of me thereto?

5. Whether or no have not many of them been publickly dishonourable to God, and scandalous to my Christian profession? Hath not mine example, if not mine enticements, drawn in others to the same sin, or driven others out of conceit with Religion? Wretched man that I am! that I should so hold [perhaps teach] the faith as to make infidels.

Lastly, Something of grievousness the circumstances of time and place, &c. may add thereto, which ought not to be overlooked.

Through such heads as these should

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should I trace my sins, especially those of them, which are most gross: and in my Meditations dwell so upon those considerations, as may, if possible, move my sorrow, at least breed an utter aversion of the sin, and a loathing of my self for it: And if it be so, that I cannot shed tears and really mourn over my sins, yet if I can find in my self, a through displeasure with my self for sin, and an hatred of it, together with an earnest desire to be freed from the habit and power of the sin, as well as from the guilt of it, this I may conclude to be a sorrow of mind, and ought therefore to cherish in my soul.

Sect. 5.

Of Repentance, which is the effect of godly sorrow, its true nature and way of practice.

2 Cor 7. 10. THe Apostle saith, *Godly sorrow worketh repentance, which is not to be repented of.* Now that repentance

take in the mortifying of it is:

2. To *resolve* there before God, *diligently to use those means*, which I have particularly consulted of, and so forthwith to *order and contrive all my affairs* (as far as in me lies) that I may without any partiality use them all, according to the best of my skill, and in the most effectual manner that I know.

The second part of the *endeavour* against sin (which will not be so much the work of my Closet, as of my life) is *diligence in* the *using* of these *means* (which I have thus considered of, found out and resolved upon) whereever I am, and whensoever I have opportunity.

Now that I may so do, it will very much help, if I write down these resolutions before God in my privacy, which I am to do in mine Accomptal; where also I am to record every dayes fasting, and the issue thereof, what I found new in mine estate, what I resolved on, what means I considered of against such

and

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and such sins. We find, they not onely made a *Covenant*, but put it in *writing, and sealed it before the Lord*, in their solemn Fast, *Nehem.* 9. 38. This will be one way to secure me against being slighty in my Penitentials: and it may besides much both confirm and quicken me in my execution of these my resolves, to read them over written by mine own hand before God in private.

And being thus registred, it will be good for me to be often (when I come into my Closet about my devotions and examine my self) looking on and reading them over, least *forgetfulness should betray me into the breach* of them.

Sect. 6.

An exemplification of the former Rules in two sins.

NOw to the end that this most necessary practice may be as plain as possible, it may haply conduce

duce to set down some particular examples, in which those general rules may appear practised. And forasmuch as it was before said, that all sins, of which we shall find our selves frequently guilty, are either such which are *rooted in our particular complexion* (and so may especially be called, *our* iniquities) or such which by *some outward occasion* (as converse or manner of living) we *fall into*, one instance shall be of such a sin, which is commonly too too much rooted in mens natures or particular *Crases*, to wit, *Uncleanness*, the other in such an one, which though haply a man may be naturally inclined to, yet commonly may be more truly referred to the head of contracted than of in-born evils, and that is, *Trifling away our time*.

First then, suppose that upon examination of my self, one sin, whereof I find my self guilty, is uncleanness, and this I find diversly to have run through a great part of my life.

Touch-

Part IV Chap. 6. Touching this, certain it is, that I repent not of it as I should, if I set not my self to root it out. Wherefore, according unto the rules laid down, I thus proceed.

Being come now so far in my devotions upon my fast day as to Meditation, and having in my Meditations chiefly imployed my thoughts upon my self, whereby I have found my self guilty of this sin, I set upon the repenting of it. To that purpose I endeavour to sorrow for it. I therefore consider, first, how grievous a sin that is in it self. And in this case it may be, that good practical book which I have chosen to my self to read and study, may much help me, and discover to me the grievousness of it in its own nature. This being done, I consider how grievous my commission of it is, what particular aggravations all my actions of this kind admit. Here I open this my book, and examine it by those aggravating particulars mentioned

See Sect. 4.

Sect. 4.

All which cordially employ-

employing my thoughts upon, I endeavour to affect my soul therewith, and to work in my self a loathing of such courses: This sorrow will work repentance, to wit, First a resolution against what I loath, and then an endeavor against it, as well by consulting remedies and means against it, as by putting my self into a way of using such means, of which particular rules have been just now given. And the result of my Humiliation thus far, I, as breifly as I can, register in mine Accomptal, in some such sort as this.

A°. D.—Januar.——*Fasted. I found my self guilty of Uncleanness. This I considered to be in it self a very grievous sin.*

1. *It defiles my very body; makes me loathsome.*

2. *It debaseth and dulls my soul.*

3. *It is that which nature it self is ashamed of.*

4. *God most perfectly hates it, and therefore when he expresseth the vilest sins,*

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sins, calls them Whoredom, Eze. 16. 15.

5. *It is one of those sins which God seldom suffers to escape unpunished here.*

6. *I shall never be able to like my self, or have any inward content in my self while I practice it.*

7. *Perseverance in it will undoubtedly destroy my body and health as well as soul.*

[*Each of these and more than these as God shall be pleased to assist me in my Meditations I am supposed to have attently considered.*]

My particular commissions in this case have the following aggravations. They have been done [*so long*]

See Sect. 4.

1. *Knowingly.* 2. [*as I find it with my self possibly against checks of conscience.*] 3. *Against my vow of baptisme expresly, &c.*

Whereupon, most humbly begging pardon of God, I resolved with all my might to endeavour against it. To that purpose I considered of these means against it.

1. *Spare*

1. *Spare diet: frequent fasting: avoiding high meats.*

2. *Spare sleeping: not lying down till sleep compel me, rising early or at least as soon as sleep leaves me.*

3. *Hard usage of my body: lying hard, using prostrations, or tiring postures in my prayers, &c.*

4. *Praying often, and much conversing with God in holy duties, which will make me ashamed of such carnal delights and sordid injoyments.*

5. *Avoiding light company, light discourse, gestures, looks, &c.*

6. *Considering death, and that in its pomp and terribleness: looking much on Sceletons, dead mens sculls, bones, or contemplating consumptive and gastly visages.*

7. *Not venturing my self on any opportunities or temptations to it.*

These I then resolved to practice, and will therefore frequently read over. Amen.

But it may be this is not my sin (however

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(however, it will teach me how to deal in humbling my self for that which is.) Suppose then I find my self guilty of *trifling away my time*. There is no repenting hereof without amendment: But what course may I take to be truly penitent for it?

The answer is: I must proceed as before. *Meditating*, *Resolving*, *Consulting*, and by all means *confirming* my self against it. And the result of what I am to register in my accompt, may be thus.

[*Such a day Fasted*] *I found my self guilty of trifling away my time. I considered the grievousness hereof.*

1. *This is truly idleness, what name soever else I give it. For idleness is not the doing nothing, but the not doing what I should when I should. Now idleness is undoubtedly a grievous sin, as having not only its own guilt in it, but the guilt of many more sins, which it occasioneth.*

2. *This is the frustrating the end of my*

my being, as far as in me lies, a living to no purpose: and that how unworthy it is of a reasonable creature!

3. I must needs be unprepared for Heaven, and my great account, while guilty hereof. Every hour stands on record in Gods omniscience: and I cannot it may be give account of three hours in a day.

4. How evidently do I ruine my self, not onely as to the future, but as to this present world hereby. What might I do, and be, were I careful of my time!

Further for me to do this, how grievous is it?

1. I know it to be sinful. 2. When I have remembred my duties to be undone, I have yet neglected them, against the present warnings of my conscience. 3. How many wayes have I been engaged against this. So much, so worthy work to do, and so much of my time already spent, &c. [Easie it is hereby to see how I may proceed according to my particular state.]

These

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These Meditations being finished, and, as briefly as I can, entred, it remains that I enter my resolution of endeavour against this sin as before: and then study meet remedies thereto. Now this sin not being alwayes natural to them in whom it is found, but adventitious, it concerns me to consider, as before admonished, how I came to be guilty hereof, and to suit my remedies to those occasions.

1. It may be I *am busied about many things*, and so either neglect all, (or what chiefly concerns me) my proper duties. Perhaps I cannot endure that which should be my business, but am fickle, desultory, and rambling in mine employment, and though I am not much guilty of doing nothing, yet do I not do what I should: and this is undoubtedly a piece of idleness, (as abovesaid) for a man to neglect the business of the season and of his calling, and to be most taken up in things which least concern him. Now here the

the remedy will be to consider what it is that is my proper business: to put my work into a certain mould and order: and then to set my self a task daily, and engage my self (as well as I can) to so much of it, before I divert to any Eccentrical occupation, I mean to the busying my self in things, which do not properly concern me. Part. IV. Chap. 6.

2. It may be I use to sit and talk away my time with friends and company: much goes in idle visits: I have a nature, which is too sociable, and when I meet with company to my mind, I know not how to deny my self of their society and discourse: and if I do not meet with such, I am apt to leave my business and go seek such. Here the remedy will be (partly the same with the former) prudently to proportion my time to my business: So much of my business have I resolved to do: that resolution must not be broken: so much time will that work take me up: so much, my

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devotions: wherefore I have but so much left for society: more therefore I must not take. If therefore I am like into any acceptable company, it will become me often to consider, how goes the time? so much of my imposed task yet lies undone, &c.

3. It may be much of my time is spent in dulness, sitting still, &c. It may be my constitution is such that if I eat heartily, I am a great while unfit for my work, and so feeding freely lies upon me a kind of necessity of being idle. Here the remedy will be to resolve upon a spare diet, to bridle mine appetite and eat less when I do eat; or if I cannot that, to eat seldomer, and to be at least but once a day unfit for my work: which time of unfitness, if I will well husband my time, I may best allow for society, it will be fit enough for that.

4. It may be vexations, anger, or giving way to passion many times indispoſeth me for business. Here the

the remedy will be to watch against such disturbances, to endeavour meekness, patience, and the mortification of unruly affections.

5. It may be sollicitude about this world, thoughtfulness, cares take up many of mine hours: and then, mine head being full, I cannot call home my mind and fall to work: and when by my care I cannot find any expedient for what I sought, this breeds discontent, envy of other mens ease, happiness, freedom, &c. And seriously it is a great deal of time, which narrow fortunes thus steal away from some men. Here the remedy will be, study of content frugality, wise husbanding mine estate, proportioning mine expences to my revenues. And so whatever I find to be the occasion of my loss or expence of time, let me study a suitable remedy thereto, and register as well the occasion as its corresponding remedy. Let me then proceed to resolve upon the use of such remedies, and to order my particular

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cular affairs in such sort that I may use them with the best advantage: and such resolutions let me alwayes enter upon my *Accomptal*, for the fastning them both upon mine heart and memory.

Sect. 7.

A further consideration of Repentance with reference to some particular sins.

REpentance may seem to have been considered hitherto with a Relation to *habitual sins*, that is, such sins which either by nature or custom are rooted in the heart, and have begot in the soul a readiness, and inclinedness unto them. But surely, if I throughly understand the Practice of it, as it hath been hitherto described, I cannot be at a loss in what sort it ought to be exercised, when I find my self guilty of one *particular fall or sin*, the habit, or customary readiness to which, I have

have not yet contracted: for the substance of my work is still the same, *viz.*

Having in mine examination of my self found my self guilty, I am by attent consideration of that sin, whereof I am guilty, both in it self, and as it is mine, to endeavour to affect my heart therewith, so that I may truly sorrow for it: and though it may be I may truly conclude, that it hath not yet got fully a rooting within me, yet for as much as the first or second commission thereof hath in probability made me more inclined and easie thereto, than I was, when my mind, having been never much bent this way, was thitherwards more inflexible, therefore ought I to study and consult how for the future to secure and confirm my soul against any relapses or second backslidings: and after such consultation to resolve and engage my self with all possible strength against it.

One thing more, in case of sins

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committed, or wrong done unto my neighbour, is yet requisite to the making my repentance sincere and through; and that is, that I forthwith upon sight of the sin, if possible, make restitution: otherwise that I make it as soon as I am able; and in case I am not likely to be able to make it, that I endeavour by acknowledgment of mine offence to seek for reconciliation unto him, whom I have so wronged. The necessity hereof may be concluded 1. from what hath been above said, that repentance cannot be true, except there be an amendment. Now most evident it is, that while I suffer the wrong done yet to remain or continue, I am still injurious; and so consequently there is no amendment, and therefore no repentance. 2. And the words of our Saviour most expressly enforce it. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift and first go and be reconciled to thy brother,*

Mat. 5. 22, 23.

ther, then come and offer thy gift. God will accept of no sacrifice or duty whatsoever, at my hands in such a case, till I have reconciled my self, if possible. If any think this not to amount to restitution, 3. let him read *Levit.* 6. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. and *Numb.* 5. 6, 7, 8, where he shall find, besides the sin offering to be brought to God in case of wrong done to others, it was enjoyned that the principal should be restored, with an addition of one fift part thereto. Now if so it be, that I cannot find those nor the relations (as Children, Widows, Heirs) of those to whom I have been injurious, that I may make restitution, let me give and devote so much to the poor as would do it: this is *to restore unto God*, when I cannot to my brother: let me never lay up any thing wrongfully gotten, or that wherewith recompence should be made for wrong done, *it will eat as doth a Canker.* Besides I cannot, if by wrong I increase my store, ever have a quiet

Part IV. Chap. 6. conſcience, or reaſonably expect the pardon of that my ſin.

Now the conſideration how this reſtitution or reconcilement may be made, and the Reſolution to make it, may be beſt done in my Cloſet: and ſuch conſultation and reſolution deſerves a place to be regiſtred amongſt my other penitential devotions, upon the ſame reaſons as they do.

Theſe rules in my repentance if I have obſerved, though I cannot look upon any action of mine as compleat, yet I may have hope I have not herein been ſlighty, but that God through Chriſt Jeſus will accept it.

Sect. 8.

Of that faith which is requiſite in order to pardon of ſin.

BEſides Repentance, it is commonly ſaid that God requireth Faith of us in order to pardon of our

our ſins: and it is moſt certain, if we underſtand faith as we ought. But it is as certain, that people are ordinarily very much miſtaken in the nature of Faith; as it is not unuſual for us to be in ſuch things, the names whereof are taken in ſuch different ſenſes as the name of Faith is in Scripture.

See Dr. *Ham. Pract. Catech* Lib. 1. Sect. 3.

Now faith, we all of us know ſignifies Belief: and therein doth the nature of it lye. Him that we believe in is God: that which we believe is his Word. So then, Faith is a full belief or credence of the whole Word of God; and eſpecially of the Goſpel; a receiving it and every part of it in a way ſuitable to the matter of it; agreeing to whatever is therein affirmed, as being true; believing all the promiſes, that God will never fail on his part, unleſs we do on ours; ſetting our ſelves to fulfil all the commands, as believing all that is commanded to be our duty and of indiſpenſible neceſſity to ſalva tion; trembling at all the

Part IV. Chap. 6.

the threatnings, as being perſwaded God will be as good as his word, and puniſh all impenitent ſinners. Faith, I ſay, is the hearty and ſincere embracing and being perſwaded of the whole word and theſe it's parts and the being affected accordingly: and we muſt not ſingle out the *promiſes* and believe them alone, for all *commands* and *threats* are no leſs the word of God than are the promiſes, and therefore muſt be as much believed, nor ſhall any one ever be juſtified who doth not thus believe.

If it be asked, whether it be not faith in the free promiſes of the Goſpel, or a truſting to God through Chriſt, that he will pardon my ſin, which doth chiefly juſtifie me, I ſay, No: and that the embracing the doctrine of the Goſpel, the receiving every command and threat ſo deeply into my heart, as that the belief of the one turns forthwith into obedience, and of the other into an holy fear, (which are the other parts of faith) cannot be conceived

ceived to be either in their own nature inferiour unto that truſt, or leſs either valued or required by God, I do not ſay that God accepts of any of them, or all of them, for their worth: (He accepts of them, and of the perſon, in whom they are purely through Chriſt; through his merits doth he impute this faith to ſuch perſon for righteouſneſs, that is, reckon and accept of this his cordial and impartial receiving his whole Goſpel after this ſort, as well as if he had performed perfect and unſinning obedience, as he was firſt bound:) but this I ſay (and that upon the evidence already hinted) that juſtification, or the pardoning of ſin, is no more appropriated to that one act of faith, which we call truſt, than to thoſe other; and that I cannot (if compariſon in this caſe be made) but account thoſe other acts (that impartial ſubmitting and devoting the ſoul to obedience anſwerably to every command, that true reſting in the fear of God) as the

Part IV. Chap. 6.

the more principal, worthy, and I am sure, less to be suspected acts of faith: At the least I cannot conceive, what we call a justifying faith to proceed any otherwise than as follows.

First, I do believe the promise of pardon of sin to be true, and God to be faithful, and that without all doubt God will not fail on his part, except I fail on mine. God will not fail to give the promised blessing, if I fail not to perform the condition, upon which he hath promised it.

Secondly, I therefore forthwith set my self about the condition, or duty required, as I expect the blessing or promised mercy from God: I sorrow for my sins; I endeavour amendment of life; I cleave unto God with full purpose of impartial obedience.

Thirdly, having done so, I do not believe that all this is worth any thing in it self, but that it is through the meer grace of God in Christ Jesus, that I must be accepted, pardoned,

doned, and saved. Wherefore I trust to God according to his promise (the condition of which I have endeavoured to fulfil) that he will through Christ pardon all my sins, and reckon this my faith to me for righteousness. To trust for the pardoning of my sins upon any other terms is unbelief and presumption: for it is a believing God will pardon my sins upon other terms, than he hath said he would ever pardon sin, and that is a believing God will be false. Part IV. Chap. 6.

But now let the case be put, that some grievous sinner, much humbled under the sense of his notorious wickedness, doth, as before-said, believe the promise to be true as it is, set himself about the fulfilling its condition (sorrowing, repenting, &c.) believe all that he doth to be in its self worth nothing, but yet Christs merits to be of infinite worth, through which notwithstanding he dare not trust for the pardon of his sins, as remembring them

Part IV. Chap. 6.

them to be so great. and doubting lest he hath not yet performed the condition, which the promise of the pardon of sin through Christs merits requires, and in this temper dies; Put, I say, this case, shall we think this man hath not a true and justifying faith? He hath surely; and it may be a truer faith, than hath many an one who yet hath more of the trust. But yet it is evident he hath not this trust: for he durst not, through sense of his own unworthiness animate himself thereto. Seeing therefore, that it is very possible a man may in such case be justified without that act of faith, I conclude that justification is not appropriate unto it, that is, that a trusting in God that he through Christ will pardon my sin, is not that act of faith which chiefly justifies me, and that they are very much mistaken, who take this (by it self) to be the true nature of justifying faith, that they believe God will pardon their sin for Christs sake.

So

So then, I now see the course which I am to take, in my humiliation, to sue out the pardon of my sin: I am to believe, that God will not fail on his part, if I do not fail on mine: I am therefore to repent of my sins, as before I have been taught, and persist in amendment of life, all the while trusting in the grace of God through Christ, according to the promise of the Gospel, that I doing thus, my sins shall not be laid to my charge, as being taken away by the cross of Christ, in whose merits I have, through this my faith and the mercy of God to me, a share. Part IV. Chap. 6.

Sect. 9.

Of Prayer upon such Fasting dayes.

THat which will much heighten my affection in this my repentance, and further compleat all its parts yet remains, to wit, prayer; which, as it must on this occasion and day be more large and particular

Part IV. Chap. 6

lar than ordinary, so I cannot now want matter for it, after such consideration of my condition, and of the way how I am to seek for pardon of sin as is supposed (if the former rules have been observed) to have foregone. Particularly, I am to frame my prayers, or at least to alter them, as neer as I can, to my condition,

1. Confessing my several sins, and that not without those aggravating circumstances, in which I formerly considered them.

2. Representing before God my sorrow, my resolution of heart against them.

3. Begging his grace, to assist me in the fulfilling my godly purposes and pardon for all my sins, whether known and confessed, or as yet unknown to me.

To these heads my Christian discretion may add more according to my particular condition. To wit, if any judgement rest on me or mine, or is feared by reason of these my

sins

sins, I may implore deliverance from it: If any mercy is expected, or by me aimed at, which I fear my sins may most justly hinder or blast, I may importune God for the granting it; or otherwise apply my self as occasion serves.

Now as to the form or outward manner of my prayer; if I am able to pray otherwise, I shall not haply on these occasions see it always fit or convenient to use set, or composed forms: for that there may be many particular affecting circumstances of my sins, which no form will express so plainly, as I have need to express them for the moving my sorrow. If therefore I find my heart ready and so composed, that I dare venture upon what we call a *conceived* prayer, which being of mine own invention, by the assistance of the Spirit, may more perfectly suit with my condition in all than one framed by another to my hand, having either noted in a paper before me the substance or mat-

Part IV Chap. 6.

ter of my *Confessions*, *Petitions*, and *Thanksgiving*, (which paper for memories sake, I lay before me when I kneel down to prayer) or else so considered of, as that it will be ready, I may spend a few thoughts touching the particular expressions; by which I intend to represent this my mind to God. To this purpose these two practices may be helpful.

1. To read any part of the word of God, which (being I daily read some of it) I may know to be suitable to my present case. If I find mine heart hard, let me read some affecting working place. (Such I may be presumed to have noted as I have read in my course.) If I find it tender, let me read such place or places, as may nourish this tenderness, or raise me to an holy joy, and delight in God and these duties which I perform to him. And in like manner, in other cases.

2. To recall and consider such ex-

expressions of the particular matters which I am to set forth before God, as I may be presumed to have observed and treasured up in my memory or book-, in my ordinary course of reading.

After such premeditation, with an holy fear, I am to endeavour to pour out my inward conceptions before God, as fitly and as fervently as I can. But I must not think that fervency lies in loud speaking, but in the inward affection of the soul: notwithstanding if my closet be so situate, that I may judge I cannot be heard without, I may many times find, that it will conduce, if not to the affecting me more, yet to the keeping my mind more close to my business, for me to speak in a voice exceeding a private whisper.

But let me be never so able a person and my heart never so fixt, to use a form so far, as where occasion shall serve to leave it a while, (to wit where I would confess or ask more particularly) may keep my prayers from

Part IV. Chap. 6.

from being loose, imperfect, broken and disorderly, and consequently make my devotions riper. Now such an one is this which follows.

Invocation.

O Thou Great, Holy, and Fearful God, unto whom all things are naked and open, and before whom, as being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, nothing that is unrighteous shall stand. I even

General Confession of grievous guilt.

blush and dread to appear before thee: for in me there is nothing but iniquity that thou canst behold. Iniquity indeed is too clean a word: I am nothing but filth. I have sinned against Heaven and before thee; and am so far unworthy of being called thy son, that I am not fit to be called thy servant: but deserve rather as a Rebel, as

a faithleſs and treacherous wretch againſt thy Majeſty, to be deſtroyed of the Deſtroyer to have all thy wrath and plagues to meet in me, and to be made unto the world an example of thy ſeverity and revenging juſtice, that by me men might learn no more to preſume and backſlide.

Allegation of promiſes, to melt the heart more kindely.

But there is mercy with thee, O Lord, that thou mayeſt be feared and ſought unto: Nor haſt thou, as thou haſt proteſted, any pleaſure in the death of ſinners; but art ſo deſirous, that they might return and be healed, that thou haſt not ſpared thy very onely begotten Son, but haſt given him to ſeek, and, by death it ſelf, to ſave the loſt ſons of men; promiſing, that of all thoſe

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

those, who through him come home unto thee, thou wilt by no means cast off any. I come, O Lord, at least I have here set my self in the way to come, and bewail my departures. And let not my Lord be angry, and I will confess.

Particular confession of habituall sins.

I have, O God, a most corrupt nature and heart, full of impurities and abominable things, as a cage of unclean birds. She was innocent in comparison of me, out of whom came but seven devils: I may most truly stile my [illegible] *Legion:* such swarms of lusts do possess me. The lusts of the flesh (†Intemperance, Idleness, Uncleanness) the lusts of the eyes (†Covetousness, Envy) the Pride of life († conceit-

Wheresoever in this prayer the mark † is found, the Reader must not forget to consider particularly touching those expressions whether they fit his condition.

ceitedneſs of my ſelf, Ambition and proud Wrath) are things familiar to me, rooted and grounded in my heart: And that truly, Lord, not ſo much by nature, as by continued cuſtom and wicked practice. I have my ſelf made my ſoul more depraved, than I ever received it from corrupt nature. That I am dull and heartleſs in the performance of all holy duties; that I am vigorous and active in the ſerving my luſts and pleaſures, and the fulfilling the deſires of my fleſh and mind; that I am vain, heedleſs, and commonly void of thy fear in all my ways, I owe very much unto my own vitious converſation; unto my giving my ſelf up to walk in my own wayes; unto my

chooſing

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choosing vanity, and addicting my self thereto; unto my either total neglect or slighty discharge of thy worship? Impossible in a manner it is, that any one who lives as I have done, should have a better heart, than I have.

Of Actual sin.

In Childhood.

And at this rate, O Lord, have I ever lived. My childhood, the innocentest part of my life, was a state of necessary ignorance of thee: yet even herein how soon did the accursed fruits of inborn lusts begin to shew themselves! My

Youth.

youth, what was it, but a vain and brutish, a mad and sensual age! As to that small notice, which therein I had of thy will and nature, how little credit did I give unto it, and how ineffectual was it upon me, either

either to the quickening me to my duty, or restraining me from any wickedness! But as to my riper years, O Lord, I know not what to say: I should in truth sit down astonished before thee, but that I want a due sense of my sinfulness. Mine iniquities are gone over my head: That they are greater than I can bear, is little; they are greater than I can comprehend or number. Nay if I should let pass my sins of ignorance, of infirmity, of heedlessness and inadvertency, (by which notwithstanding I seriously acknowledge my self times without number, to have dishonoured and provoked thee:) If I should insist only upon my knowing, presumptious and wilfull sins, even

O these,

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these, O Lord, it were impossible for me to reckon up. For besides that vast number of them, which I cannot call to mind (all which notwithstanding are upon record before thee) what a black and tedious Catalogue of them have I here open [or, which I can spread] before thee! How many wilful neglects, yea even contempts, of my duty! How many resolute perpetrations of horrid crimes; such which I now am ashamed even to think of, yet did not then blush to commit; sins, the heinousness whereof being considered, if I could do nothing else but mourn over them all my dayes, though I should weep as my Saviour sweat, in bloud, under unknown anguish and agonies, I could not but

but account my self impenitent. Nay, had I onely that one sin of [**] so often by me repeated to bewail, what sorrow could suffice for its due lamentation!

Here are to be mentioned thy chiefest and most frequent sin or sins.

But if I add hereunto my [**] my [**] &c. what reason have I, were my fasts, confessions, prayers and teares a thousand fold to what they are or can be, to sit down and lament my notorious impenitence!

Actual sins aggravated.

And besides this weight of guilt, which the heinous nature of my sins themselves load me with, what a sad additional pressure do their dismal aggravations bring? What circumstance almost can there be that makes sin grievous

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

which I may not find in most of mine? It is but an ordinary aggravation of my sins, that they have been committed against knowledge, that I have held thy truth in unrighteousness, and being convinced of my duty, have both neglected it, and done contrary unto it.

Against conscience.

† The very instant dictates of conscience, protesting against the sins which I have been about to commit; the smitings of mine own heart, not onely after and before, but amidst the very commission of them, have not restrained my head-strong will.

Against the strivings of the Spirit.

† Nay, O Lord, hath not the voice of thy Spirit joyned with the voice of my Conscience, and the united perswasions of both striven with me

but all in vain? † Have I not known that if I would resist; through thy grace I should overcome? And might I not through the same grace, have resisted if I would? † Have not I at the very same time thought of thy wrath and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things? and yet this in vain too. ¶ And besides the vow of my Baptisme, which I have owned and acknowledged my self to stand bound by, Ah! Lord, have I not made many a particular vow against those very sins, which after, as a Dog to his vomit, I have returned to; and † those vows brought to thy Table, and sealed in the blood of thy Son? ¶ Have not I slighted thy mercies encouraging

Against Vows.

At the Lords Table.

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Against mercies and judgments.

ing mine obedience, and on the contrary, sometimes wrung out almost the dregs of thy wrath in punishment of my backslidings.

Against hindrances.

Further, hast not thou many a time hindred me in my prosecution of these sins, and by some interposing providence, dulled the temptation, which I lay under towards them;† When yet I have proved so far a Divel to my self, as to retrieve the temptation, and over-bearing the voice of my conscience, the resistance of thy Spirit, breaking through all engagements to obedience, which either thou or my self have laid upon me, yea, and the very hindrances and lets, which have been put in my way against those sins,

sins, I have returned to the attempts and practices of them! Ah Lord! What can such a sinner be fit for, but destruction? And yet after this sort, how long have I lived, sinning! And how have I hardened my heart against all those means, which thou hast used for my betterment! Besides, How many of these my sins have been committed openly and in the sight of the Sun, to the dishonour of thee, and to the scandal of others, who beholding my practices, have blasphemed, at least been provoked to blaspheme and speak evil of Christianity!

Continuance in sin.

Openess of sin.

All this, O Lord, is but my old wickedness: I have later [and † therefore if possible, some of them more grievous.]

Confession of later sins.

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sins to confess unto thee. It is but [such or such a time or day] that I [* * *] Ah! how can I lift up my face, or look towards thee my so oft offended God! ¶ And yet, notwithstanding all this, I have not yet done, O Lord. For besides these sins of mine own, what a multitude of the sins of other men do I stand accessary unto and guilty of! How many, for ought I know have I undone by my example! What a multitude is there, for whose prophaneness and unbelief (being occasioned by the scandal against Religion, which my looseness hath possest them with) I am to answer for! † Some there are, whom I have more directly

Here mention later falls.

Confession of my other mens sins.

rectly and neerly corrupted. And how many more may they have corrupted, who haply had not been in that case corrupt themselves, had not I proprogated such sins to them! Ah! wretched man that I am, who have not been so far innocent as to be wicked alone, and destroy no more than my self.

Confession of impenitence

And now, O Lord, after I have confessed thus much, notwithstanding all which I have confessed, and much more which I am not able to express, nor so much as my self to know, what an hard unbroken and stupid heart have I! The truth is, the multitude and grievousness of my sins is such, as is enough to make me impenitent and desperate up-

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on the meer sight of them † I may well doubt whether it be possible, that such a back-sliding wretch as my self should ever be renewed again unto repentance, or thereby restored. ¶ But forasmuch as I understand, that to turn thus desperate, and to neglect repentance and amendment of life, would be worse than all the wickedness, which I have hitherto wrought, I am here prostrate before thee to bewail my self, and with sorrow and grief of heart for my former wayes do I here cast my self upon thee. If thou wilt have mercy, thou canst still save me: If thou wilt not, Lord, I perish. But doest thou use to suffer those to perish who thus, with such repen-

Addresse of affiance, or casting the soul on God for mercy.

tance

grace as they can, submit and humble themselves at thy footstool, crying unto thee for help? Far be it from thee, thou Father of Mercies! Notwithstanding, inasmuch as I, being much worse than ordinary sinners, do more justly deserve to find no place for repentance, and have therefore more reason to fear how thou maist deal with me, deal with me as thou wilt, through thy grace I will sin no more, no more knowingly and presumptuously as I have done. And to that end I have here in thy presence this day considered my wayes: I have endeavoured to find out those wiles and methods, by which the Devil and mine own lusts have ensnared me in such

Resolution against sin represented to God.

Part IV Chap. 6.

such grievous sins. + I have resolved upon impartial diligence as well in my endeavours against these particular evils as against all other, and in performing unto thee hearty and intire obedience. These Resolutions I here humbly present before thee, sacredly engaging my self to do my utmost to keep them, and beseeching thee by thy grace to engage my heart more firmly to them. And, Lord, let not any dulness or want of that affection, with which I ought to have confessed my sins, to have bewailed my guilt, and to have passed these resolutions, hinder, that this my serious humiliation of my selfe should not be accepted before thee. Such contrition, as thou

Petition.

For acceptance of penitence.

thou hast enabled me to, I have endeavoured, sorrowing that I am not more deeply humbled: Such, which is wanting, do thou bestow; For it is no less thy poverty to bestow than to accept the contrite heart: The broken spirit is, O Lord, from thee. When thou of old commandedst water out of the flinty Rock, it forthwith yielded obedient streams: nor can my heart (dry and hard as it is) but dissolve into holy tears, if thou wilt bid it melt: Give forth then the word, O God; Speak, thy servant is here ready to hear. Turn thou me and I shall be turned. Send out thy good Spirit: let it enlighten the eyes of my mind, in the knowledge both of my self and

For more brokeness of heart.

For thorough conversion.

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and thee; let it savingly perswade me of the truth of all that thou hast spoken, and especially, of the defiling, cursed, and damning nature of sin, of the sufficiency and efficacy of the merits of Christ Jesus unto all those, who by a right faith apply themselves to thee through him. (I do O Lord, believe, help my unbelief.) and grant that this sight and perswasion both of my sin and Saviour may affect mine heart, so that I may sorrow after a godly sort: and that sorrow may bring forth in me those wholesome fruits (which after all my endeavours of repentance I cannot but lament to be much wanting in me, to wit) *carefulness against sin, vehement desire and zeal*

zeal of holiness, indignation and an holy revenge against my self; by all which I may for the future clear my self, and ever approve mine heart honest, upright and sincere before thee. ¶ Suffer not this my righteousness to be only, as a morning cloud or early dew, soon passing away, but let thy grace alwayes dwelling in me keep open in my soul an ever-flowing fountain of such penitence, that I may go on thus mourning to mourn over my sins, and perfecting holiness in thy fear; accounting all little enough, if so be I may but in the end obtain mercy. And this my penitent return (at least hearty endeavour of such return) accompanied with persevering study of impartial

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

For Perseverance

For Justification

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partial obedience to thee, do thou, however moſt unworthy in it ſelf, through the perfect merits of thy Son accept, waſhing away all my ſins (both the iniquities of my youth and tranſgreſſions of my riper years, as well known as unknown) eſpecially my [**] in his bloud; and reckoning, according to thy gracious Covenant, this my faith (which by ſuch works as theſe ſhall diſcover it ſelf to be alive and true) unto me for righteouſneſs. And, if thine infinite Wiſdom ſhall ſee it to be good for me, do thou grant me this further happineſs, that I thus living in thy fear, may be ever filled with peace and joy, through a comfortable

Here mention thy chiefeſt ſin or ſins.

For Aſſurance.

comfortable assurance of thy favour, and hopes of eternal glory.

For outward comforts.

As to all my outward affaires, by thy good providence be thou pleased so to overrule all events, that whatsoever befalls me may work together to me for good. My sins indeed, O Lord, deserve quite contrary; even the severest inflictions of thy wrath and fiery displeasure. And I do most seriously acknowledge, that in all the judgments, which thou hast at any time laid upon me, thou hast used much mercy. All the paines, which my body hath felt; all the losses, which have impaired my estate; all the slanders, which have blasted my name [particularly

Confession as to judgments.

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

ticularly * *] I embrace as infinitely leſs than my deſerts.

Here mention any particular afflictions.

That † I am in any ſtraits, [* *] that I ſuffer otherwiſe [in my body, relations, &c. * *] were all a thouſand fold to what it is, I ſhould confeſs it to be moſt juſt. Were I to enjoy no more good than I do deſerve, I ſhould have juſt nothing. Righteous therefore art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee. Yet if thou wilt be intreated by thy repenting ſervant, to † withdraw [* or withhold] thy hand, to remove the puniſhment I feel [or not to inflict the puniſhments which I fear] but

Deprecation of them.

* *These and ſuch like expreſſions are to be uſed according to perſons particular conditions.*

but through the bloud of Christ to deliver me from thy present wrath, as well as from the wrath to come, thy servant shall ever bless and praise thee, and be able to serve thee with more chearful diligence. However, Lord, thy Will be done: Bring me surely to thy self, let it be by what means thou wilt: Please thy self, thy servant will endeavour to be content: Deny me what things thou wilt, onely deny me not *Grace, Pardon, and thy Self.* Part IV. Chap. 6.

And not only upon me, O Lord, but upon all men do thou have mercy, according to the gracious pleasure of thine own most holy Will. Especially upon the universal Church; Enlarge thou its bounds; Intercession.

Part IV. Chap. 6.

bounds; provide for its safety and purity, delivering any part of it, which is in danger, and reforming whatsoever of it is corrupted. Do thou with all suitable mercies bless this particular Church: Forgive the publick sinnes [* * *] Heal the publick Calamities [* * *] Preserve, and every way be gracious unto the Kings Majesty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Let all thy Priests be cloathed with Righteousness, and let thy work prosper in their hands: and especially within this Parish, of which I am a part, let the knowledge and fear of thee increase. Visit all my Kinred, Relations, and Acquaintances [* * *] with such

Here mention such sins or calamities.

ſuch bleſſings as they need. Reward a thouſand fold all who have ſhewn any kindneſs to thy ſervant; [eſpecially **.] Forgive and have mercy upon all mine enemies, and let not one of them ever fare the worſe for any wrong done to me. Deliver in thine own good time thy righteous ones out of all their afflictions, and in the mean time ſupport them, ſanctifying all unto them. [**] Shew thy ſelf every way all-ſufficient unto all thine.

In all theſe vacancies thus marked [**] make ſuch particular mention as thy condition ſhall require, or prudence ſuggeſt.

Thankſgiving.

Finally, O Lord, I bleſs and praiſe thy glorious grace, for all thoſe bleſſings which I enjoy, and thoſe particular deliverances, whether ancient or later

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latter, which thou hast vouchsafed me. [**] Above all, for thy redeeming, not onely me but the whole humane nature, by the precious bloud of thy well-beloved Son; for that knowledge which I have of thee in him my Saviour Christ Jesus; for any sight and sense of my sin, which through thy grace I have; for any hopes of finding mercy in that great day. [**] I, O Lord, am far less than the least of these mercies. It is thy goodness, thy goodness alone, which is the fountain whence they came: and mayest thou from me, and from Heaven and Earth, ever receive the glory of that thy goodness.

Here bless God for any inward joy, enlargements, &c.

May

May I ever ſerve thee in newneſs of life and anſwerable walking.

Concluſory Petitions.

And do thou forgive not onely my former ingratitude, but my preſent want of thankfulneſs, together with all the ſins of theſe my holy things, waſhing me, and my very tears, prayers, and penitence in the bloud of my Saviour Chriſt Jeſus, in whoſe words thy ſervant will ſpeak yet once more,

Our Father, &c.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that this Prayer without any alteration will ſuit with the condition of every Reader: God forbid all ſhould have ſinned at that rate, to come up to which this Prayer was framed. The prudent Chriſtian therefore

Part IV. Chap. 6.

therefore is to add, leave out, a
what he sees good; or, if able h
self to do better, to lay aside all. N
thing is here obtruded on any, o
directions and help intende
some who need them.

Sect. 10.

*Of offerings to God for the use of t
poor; departure out of the Clos
and behaviour afterwards.*

MY prayers being thus finish
I should not hastily run ou
but pause a while, and remembe
that there is one work remaining
which is not to be neglected, if
have wherewithall to do it, being
is required by God in an accep
ble Fast: and that is, to add some
thing every fast, though it be th
less, to what I have formerly la
aside for the poor; or if there be
no such stock already made by me
much more then to design and de

vote

somewhat to that purpose. Part IV. Chap. 6.
is is the fast I have chosen, to deal bread unto the hungry, &c. It Isa. 58. 7.
ing thus given, I may deal it when
shall see occasion. Now as to the
ticular manner of this practice,
rections have been above given,
hich especially upon these dayes it
ll be expedient to observe.
And this being done, let me with
arfulness depart my Closet, let
my behaviour be without inno-
nt alacrity: and let it be my spe-
cial care so to order all my carriage
these my fasts, that they may,
if possible, be taken notice of
by but my self and God; as
e mindful of that command of
Saviours, *Anoint thine head, and* Matt. 6.
wash thy face, that thou appear not 17.
men to fast, that is, behave thy
with such outward chear-
ess (of which anointing the
ad and washing the face are
guments) that no man or-
arily beholding thee, would
ve the day he sees thee so, to

be one of thy fast or mourning dayes.

Chap. VII.

Of great and more extraordinary Fasts, and the work of them.

BEsides these my Fasts which come in course, at least once a week, several occasions may befall me, which may require an extraordinary fast. Such is any great evil hanging over mine head, or my friends, or the Nations, any considerable change of my way of living, or the like: but especially when I am to receive the Holy Communion.

My work upon such occasions will be the same as is formerly directed to: only my Christian discre-

tion

will order it with a particular
ect to that my great occasion
ich calls me to fast: which occa-
on I am especially to meditate up-
(and that not without a regard
d to my sins, if there be any evil
hich I deprecate, to consider how
y sins have been the causes of it, if
y good which I beseech for, how
n my sins may blast that) and
ordingly to commend it to God
my prayers: in which case also
e form of prayer delivered in the
egoing Chapter will not be use-

Particularly as to that which will
st frequently come in practice
y humiliations preparatory for the
ords Supper. In these, besides
e examination of my self, which
ordinary course I make, I am to
over mine Accompt, to see
ry week, since my last commu-
cating, what my carriage hath
en, how I have amended, especi-
y in those particulars, in which I
d formerly taken notice of my

Part IV. Chap. 7.

miscarriages, and vowed reformation. All my revolts and backslidings are to be attentively viewed, in themselves and in their aggravations, and repentance, as before taught, to be with all diligence and fervour, that I can, exercised. (But in case I am a new communicant, and now making my first address unto the Lords table, or in case I have formerly been there, but not with so due preparation as I now would make, although the former rules of the practice of humiliation and repentance contain the chief part of my duty; yet directions more particular will be presently subjoined.)

Yea, and besides these times of special exigence, ought I to be often surveying and looking over mine Accomptal. In mine ordinary daily devotions, or in my devotions upon my fast-dayes I shall find both need and opportunity for it. And if Scholars find it necessary to peruse their own Collections or Common-place books, if Shopkeepers review often their

their books, to the end they may, by seeing what they have formerly done, know how to order their future proceedings in their business, so as not to go backward, or be diligent to no purpose, how much more care ought I to take in the concernments of my soul, and for that Jewel which if I loose, although I should gain the whole world, I am irreparably undone.

Chap. VIII.

The Conclusion.

THe Author of this small piece, Christian Reader, is very sure, that be thou who thou wilt, thou canst not but approve for the main that practice which is here commended to thee: although there should be some particulars (as

Part IV. Chap. 8.

to the observation of Holy-dayes or the like) which may not suit with the humour of every mans devotion. Confident he is, he saith, that the daily practice of *Reading*, *Meditation*, *Self-examination*, *Prayer*, the orderly and due practice of *Humiliation*, *Mortification*, and the rest of those Substantials, which are here directed to, cannot be gainsaid. It might have been better taught, but he hath done it as well and as plainly as he could. Being therefore that thou canst not but say, he is a good man who thus lives, and wish that thou ever hadst lived so, he chargeth it again upon thy conscience thus to live: else art thou self-condemned, and guilty of known negligence and omission.

tion. Thou doest not endeavor what notwithstanding thy conscience cannot but approve. He is confident further, that if thou didst but feel that peace, quiet, joy and happiness, which such practice leaves behind it, if thou hast any sense what it is to have a clear Conscience, and therefore free and chearful access to God, and an humble fearlessness of the face of men, which without some such practice as this thou canst never have, thou needest no other argument to quicken thee to this practice. Find a greater happiness on earth, than for a man to be at peace with and like himself, and get that peace by any other course, than such exercise of godliness, such circumspection over

Part IV. Chap. 8.

all thy wayes, as hath been here taught, and thou ſhalt have leave to neglect all: but if thou canſt not, then think thy ſelf bound to theſe practices. For directions in the making uſe of the Book thou haſt them in the *Admonition to the Reader*, in the beginning of the Book, whither return and read the whole over again: It will be no whit worſe the ſecond time read: And ſo God bleſs it and thee.

FINIS.

PERSWASIVES
WITH
DIRECTIONS
To the frequent and Holy use
OF THE
LORDS SUPPER.

By way of Appendix to the *Method of Private Devotion.*

---

2 Cor. 3. 4.

Having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, we walk not in craftiñes, nor handle the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commend our selves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God.

London, Printed for *John Martyn*, and are to be sold at the *Bell* a little without *Temple-Bar*, 1668.

WITH

DIRECTIONS

OF THE

LORDS SUPPER.

PERSWASIVES WITH DIRECTIONS To the frequent and Holy use OF THE Lords Supper.

By way of an Appendix to the Method of Private Devotion.

Chap. I.

A proposition of the particular matters to be treated of in this Appendix.

PRivate devotion was never designed to take us off from, but prepare us for the publick worship of God. Wherefore, as considera-

Chap. 1. tion hath been above had, and ac-
compt endeavoured, touching those
secret duties in the closet, which
publick prayer, hearing the Word
and sanctifying the Lords day re-
quire of me in order to their due
performance, so is it but justice now
that I consider what particular
work in my Closet the worthy re-
ceiving of the Lords supper will
find my devotion. And forasmuch
as upon the very first thoughts of
this most Divine and Heavenly Or-
dinance, if reflecting withal on com-
mon practice, I cannot but observe
a double fault very rife in this our
Israel of *Neglect* on the one side,
some coming not at all or very sel-
dom, and of *Temerity* on the o-
ther, in them who come to it (and
perhaps often) but consider not
much either how or why they come,
it ought to be my care to avoid
both these rocks, and as comman-
ed both to *do it often*, and with
due *remembrance* of him whose
death I *shew forth till he come*.

Chap.

Chap. II.

Considerations to move to frequenting the Lords Supper.

TO move me to be a frequent guest at the Lords Table; let me duely consider the obligations which lye upon me thereunto: some my Saviour, some the Church, some my very own condition and wants lay upon me.

Sect. 1.

Obligations from Christ.

First, my Saviours very instituting a means by which I might so intimately united, and as it were mixt with him, obliges me not only in point of Ingenuity but Gratitude. For, let me lay it to heart. May this earthen body of mine, polluted as it is with a world

Chap. 2. of sins, be yet made the temple and receptacle of the glorious body of my Lord, nay, in a sort have that body incorporated with it, and is it possible I can be so dull as not to move with all might and haste to the means of such advancement? such dulness and baseness of spirit is not surely incident into a reasonable creature, if duely considerative. But then let me remember, This body was pierc'd, and torn, and given to death for me; this bloud spilt for the remission of my sins, and will not this endear it to me? Have I means appointed by my very crucified Saviour himself, by which I may come and take my share of that very body which hung on the Cross for me, of that bloud, by which I believe and hope for the remission of my sins; and can I be so irreligiously ungrateful as not to come at it? Are neglects the onely fit retribution to repay unto my crucified and bleeding Lord, bleeding for me too, offering me still his bloud

bloud? I cannot ſure turn my back. Chap. 2.

¶ Further, A ſecond obligation my Saviour laid upon me. by that ſtrange zeal of love towards me and the humane nature, with which he came to the inſtitution of this Sacrament. When he ſpeaks of his own paſſion, before he entred upon it, *I have a Baptiſme*, ſaith he, *to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitned till it be accompliſhed?* He ſeems even to have longed to ſuffer for us, to have thought the time tedious till he had been betray'd, and ſcoft, and ſcourg'd, and tortur'd, and had bled for us (for a mixture of *love* and *deſire* of accompliſhing his work, conflicting with natural dread of the forſeen cup, muſt that his being *ſtraitned* ſpeak) And at the beginning of that ſupper after which he inſtituted this Sacrament. *With deſire* (the word is uſed for Luſt) have I deſired *to eat this paſſeover with you before I ſuffer.* As if he had ſaid, Within theſe few hours I ſhall be led away to ſuffer for you, Luke 12. 50. Luke 22. 15.

Chap. 2. which (such is my love to you) I long to do. But before that, I have another no less passionate an appetite to satisfie, and that is of instituting that Sacrament by which you, and all that shall believe in my name to the end of the world, may be made partakers of that body and bloud, which I am about to give for them. Let me lay then this to heart: can I now add unnaturalness to my disingenuity and ungratitude, and turn my back on my dying Saviour, when he is now greedy and most passionately desirous, I might take my part of that body and bloud which was given for my redemption.

If desires move not, yet surely commands may, for these are most directly obligatory.

Thirdly then, If my dying Saviour did not command me this, and command it too in *remembrance* of his death and passion; and *to shew forth his death* till he come: the neglect might possibly seem more

more tolerable. But now, to the importunity of the Sacraments own nature and our Lords most passionate desires to have it instituted, he hath added his commands also three times recorded by the Evangelists, and once by St. *Paul*, that it might not be deemed an unnecessary matter, which could be spared, shall I to my disingenuous and unnatural ingratitude, add direct disobedience and rebellion? Shall I stand out against all those obligations which heaven can lay upon me? Will I neither be won by such institutions, which even ingenuity and natural ambition would prompt me to embrace, nor yet by peremptory commands to taste and take what is so provided? What can I, in case I still stand out, think of my self? What can I say in mine own excuse? Or what can I look for, but to be denied my portion in that blood, the participation of which, against such obligations from my Saviour I have thus neglected. Chap. 2.

Sect. 2.

Obligations from the Church.

BEsides this, the Church hath laid obligations upon me hereto both by its *Practice*, *Command and Discipline*.

As to the *Practice* of the Church, it will not be easie to pitch upon any publick degeneracy in the present Church, which the practice of the Primitive Church doth more upbraid us of, than infrequent and seldom communicating. In all likelihood immediately after our Lords Ascension, and the Descension of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles, and those early Proselytes of Christianity daily received the Lords Supper: which though a most learned person, who more than once affirmed it most probable, (from *Acts* 2.) afterwards seems to doubt, yet I doubt less of, foraſmuch as St. *Austin* acquaints us it was usual even in his dayes. How-

Epist. 118 ad Januar.

ever

ever that none of their ſolemn Aſ- Chap. 2.
ſemblies in the ancient Church were
without a Communion is moſt cer-
tain from all antiquity: And the Acts 20. 7
Scripture it ſelf teſtifies expreſly as
to the Lords day: The reſtauration
of which pious courſe, that our
Church at the Reformation deſign-
ed, is from hence moſt evident, that
there is no Lords day nor Feſtival
throughout the year, which hath not
a peculiar Communion Service ap-
pointed for it.

¶ If the practice of the Primitive
and purer Church move us not, I
confeſs there is reaſon to fear the
injunctions of our particular Church
will but little avail. However, he
who bid us account that brother as Matth. 18.
an Heathen and *Publican* who re- 17.
fuſed to hear the Church, thought
ſure that her commands had no
ſmall obligation on her children.
And the Apoſtle that commanded
us to obey thoſe that rule over us, Heb. 13.
and ſubmit our ſelves to them inaſ- 17.
much as *they watch for our ſouls*,

Chap. 2. and withall added, that it is *unprofitable for us*, that by reason of our untractableness they should be able onely with *grief* to give *account* to heaven of us, conceived it fit we should be obedient to such wholesome Laws, as those our Rulers should give unto us.

Now the substance of the Commands of our Church in this case we find in the Rubrick at the end of the Communion, that in all Parishes every Parishioner communicate, *at least thrice a year*. This is the least our Church will tolerate; not but that it is evident she would have her Children more frequently to communicate, as appears from that expression *at the least thrice* but considering the common backwardness of people, she commanded what she might have hopes to obtain, the least which possibly (the generality of mens occasions being all considered) she could judge in any sort tolerable, and that was thrice a year. Wherefore in Cathedral and Collegiate

legiate Churches, it is injoyned (as in the precedent part of the same Rubrick) that all the Ministers thereof communicate (except in case of reasonable impediments, of which negligence undoubtedly is none) *every Lords day at least*; that expression intimating (as well as another [*viz. on Holidays if there be no Communion*] a little before) that it was fit and requisite that commonly on dayes of Solemn Assemblies, as are Lords dayes and Holidayes, there should be a Communion. Of this requiring of her Ministers (wherein convenient number to make up a Communion) that they should thus often communicate, whereas the people seem left at greater liberty, I suppose the reason is, because she presumes and requires them to be of stricter lives and sanctity than the common sort. So that it will from hence follow that our Church judgeth it requisite to all persons who would live strictly and more devote to God, than Chap. 2.

Chap. 2. than the common ſort who too much incumber themſelves in the world, frequently, if not weekly to communicate.

¶ As to diſcipline, it hath been moſt reaſonable adjudged, that the ſevere ſentence of excommunication is moſt juſtly due to ſuch who neglect the participation of the Lords Supper. The Canon enjoyneth the Miniſter and Churchwarden to ſignifie ſuch: The Churchwarden is bound upon his oath, as the Miniſter: by the fidelity he ows to the Church, to make preſentment of ſuch. And amongſt thoſe particular caſes for which by ſtatute, the Writ *to take the Excommunicate perſon* lies, not receiving the Communion is one expreſſy. Which ſevere Diſcipline none can juſtly blame, who conſiders, that ſuch perſons do in manner Excommunicate themſelves, or will grant, that the Church and the Magiſtrate are bound not to ſee the Commands of Chriſt, and Ordinances of the Goſpel

ſpel neglected, but to conſtrain ſuch, who have ſubjected themſelves to the Goſpel, to obedience to it, where they will not voluntarily perform it. And it ſeems reaſonably demandable, why a man ſhould be puniſhed for ſwearing, for prophaneing the Lords day, or the like crimes (as thoſe who blame the ſeverity of this Law judge fit) if he may not be puniſhed for groſs neglect of the Lords Supper; ſeeing both equally offend againſt Divine commands. I cannot then but in reaſon think my ſelf bound frequently to communicate by the obligations which the primitive and preſent Church lay upon me.

Sect. 3.

Of Obligations from within.

LAſtly, doth not my own condition and wants ſtrongly importune and oblige me to it?

1. Have I ſo faithfully kept the covenant of my Baptiſme and

Chap. 2 and those latter vows and engagements which I have made to God that I do not need to renew them? Alas! have I been faithful to any one of them? Now what so proper or firm renovation of them as by this second Sacrament. If I have broken my covenant, I have certainly forfeited the benefits I covenanted for, pardon of my sins, and life eternal. And how can I expect these if when God daily offers to receive me again into covenant (as he doth by this Sacrament) I neglect to come in, and enter covenant. But, possibly that I think I can do, by setting down private resolutions in my Closet, without coming in publick to the Lords Table: Let me enquire then further.

2. Are all my corruptions so mortified, and graces so strong that single vows will hold me? Do not I daily find a double, yea treble and manifold cord (all the methods which I can invent or use to confirm my resolutions) to be little enough

enough, and (God knows) many times too little? And must I not confess this Sacrament instituted by Christ as the primary and most Sovereign means of strengthening me? Nay, do not I find in my own experience, possibly, that of all the vows that ever I made in my life, I have been most cautious of these which I sealed in the bloud of my Saviour: Though possibly (wretch that I am) I have broken some of them, yet I broke them most difficultly. With what conscience then, can I absent my self from, and neglect this Sacrament? Am I afraid of making my vows too strong? But possibly, I am jealous of my self, that I shall break even these vows thus renewed, and thus sealed, and therefore fear by new communicating I shall only aggravate my succeeding falls. Let me consider this case. Chap. 2.

Is my guilt like to be any whit the less, because I do not strive against sin as much as I may, and use against

Chap. 2. against it all those means I have? As in my present state, I despond in a manner of my own standing: of the two it is more likely, I shall be able to overcome when I struggle to the last effort. and leave no means unattempted, by which I may strengthen my self and get above mine enemies. Certainly if I endeavour my utmost against known and deliberate sins, God will not charge every slip or surprisal as a cancelling of this my renewed Covenant. But possibly I distrust my self and fear I shall not, do all I can, so stand: In this case to come to a short issue, either I do resolve for happiness or not: if I resolve not for happiness indeed, 'tis no matter whether I communicate or no; I am a person desperate; who have given up my self to Sin and Hell. If I do resolve for happiness, it is certain I must resolve to exert my utmost might against every sin, and especially against such to which I am most subject. And if I have so resolved,

Chap. 2

solved, but distrust my own constancy to such passed resolves, I shall be willing and desirous to use all means to enforce, ensure and (if it it were possible) constrain my self to constancy; and God hath not appointed, nor can I find out a more Sovereign means than this of the Lords Supper. I am therefore in conscience, as I tender my own Salvation, to frequent it, and in case I should yet fall again, to sorrow more deeply for such supposed future falls than ever, to resolve and endeavour new amendment (as before considered in the Practice of Repentance) to weigh with my self what a sad condition they are in, who have the abused bloud of Christ to witness against them, from which estate there is no way in the world to rescue me, but resumeing, with new vigor, my former good resolutions, and fresh addresses unto that bloud for pardon and strength: thus am I to persist in the daily practice of repentance, and mortification, and use

Priv. Devot. Part. 4. Chap. 6. Sect. 4, 5.

Chap. 2. use of all means, especially of this strengthening Sacrament, as often as I have opportunity; to the end I may rescue my self out of this snare of the devil. So that in fine, if this be my case I see my self inexcusably accessary to my own ruine, if I neglect this recovering Sacrament.

¶ Besides these, I have great reason to fear there are other wants in my soul, which oblige me to frequent communicating. I enquire therefore further,

3. Do I use to keep all my accounts so even with God, and my heart in such a gracious frame, that I have not much need of that Ordinance, which shall bring me to such righting my accounts (I mean to the strict examination of my self, touching new sins, reforming for the future, and sueing out the pardon of what is past) and to a more tender and heavenly temper of mind? Alas, is not there many a sin which I fall into in my days, which

which passeth me unrepented! And as to all my private Fasting and Humiliations of my self, have I not need of some efficacious means, to make me more strict and careful, to deliver me from my usual slightiness and perfunctory performance of such duties. Again, Doth not many a day pass me, in which I have great reason to complain of the want of a due sense of God, and my own duty on my heart? Do not I put up many a dull, and heedless and hard-hearted prayer? and must I not confess, that, as it is very sinful and dangerous thus to live, with particular sins unrepented of (or onely carelessly considered) and with an heart very much void of an heedful fear, or eyeing of God, so that the Lords Supper is a very proper and effectual remedy to both these so dangerous and intolerable evils? Can I then impute either to frailty of my nature, and to common indispositions incident from worldly business; if in the mean

Chap. 2.

Chap. 2. mean time I am conſcious to my ſelf of my neglect of that divine Ordinance, which would reſcue me from both. I ſee then, that that happy condition, into which preparation for this Sacrament would ſet me (of having matters ſtraiter in a good meaſure between heaven and my ſoul, by reaſon whereof I were fit for any thing, even death it ſelf) and that bleſſed frame of ſpirit, into which both preparation and the frequent participation of the Ordinance it ſelf would bring me, render the neglect moſt inexcuſable. Again,

4. Do I walk ſo innocently, and with ſuch exactneſs obſerve the the rules of Charity, as that I have no need of that holy Seal of Chriſtian Communion, which I dare not come unto, till I have reconciled my heart to every man living, and to my power made ſatisfaction for every wrong I have done, and put an end unto all unchriſtian contentions and animoſities between me

and

and others? Certainly my life is not so purely inoffensive, but I wrong many, if not by deed yet by words, or at least by uncharitable surmises and censures of them, and possibly too by secret ill will and grudge. And are these things either unnecessary to be rooted out, or am I so ready and diligent in the doing of it, and in further reconciling my self, and satisfying my offended brother, that for this purpose I have no need of this Sacrament which shall enforce me after a sort thereto? Chap. 2.

5. Is my Christian faith and hope so strong, my comforts and holy joyes so firm and advanced, that I find not this Seal of my union with my Saviour and pardon of all my sins most necessary? Should a dangerous disease befall me, or my life otherwise be hazarded, have I a confidence of my future happiness strong enough to bear me up above the terrours of death, and to supply with courage to endure what ever danger

Chap 2. danger I may be brought into, even death it ſelf, rather than ſeek an eſcape by any unworthy means? Rather, were I now to die, would I not miſerably tremble, and doubt of my future eſtate? Were I ſtript of all earthly comforts, ſhould I not be miſerably diſſatisfied, and unable to quiet my ſelf and meekly endure the Croſs with due *reſpect unto the recompence of reward*, which I have not poſſibly ſuch a well-grounded hope, much leſs ſuch a certainty, perſwaſion and aſſurance of, as it concerns me to provide for the arming my ſelf againſt all trials. And let me lay this to heart duely: If I come to be perplext with fears and doubts upon my death-bed, want courage, or behave my ſelf baſely in ſuffering, ſhall I not then too late a thouſand times blame and bitterly cry out of my neglect of this ſacred Ordinance? Shall I not ſay all I could have done had been little enough to ſupport my ſpirit, and be ready to ſink that I have been ſo regardleſs? Laſt-

Lastly: But suppose I have been so happy a man as to have behaved my self so Christianly in all these particulars, as that my conscience accuseth me not of any fault or defect (which I shall scarce find) either as to unfaithfulness in holiness, or neglectiveness of my great accounts, unmeet frame of spirit, uncharitableness, weakness of faith and hope, yet shall have I need of this Sacrament to keep me in this so blessed a condition. Certainly I have not, nor can have any assurance of my perseverance, (which the word of God will warrant or not call wild and presumptuous) without my use of those means, which the Gospel ordain'd, as well for the continuance, as advance of me in grace. Chap. 2.

Sect. 4.

Sect. 4.

The ſumme of all urged againſt the ordinary excuſes.

TO ſum up all then: Is the Lords Supper ſo great a priviledge, yea even advancement to my nature? Was my Lord ſo paſſionately deſirous to have it inſtituted? Did he now dying ſtrictly charge me to eat thereof in *remembrance* of him? Doth the Church by her practice, command, and diſcipline enjoyn and even enforce me to it, and is the thing it ſelf ſo exceeding needful and beneficial to me, being a renovation of my Covenant with God, a confirmation of my vows, and a ſtrengthening me againſt all ſins; yea further, a means to place me in the full favour of God, and bring me to a moſt heavenly temper of mind, to renew, maintain and augment my charity, my faith, hope, and Chriſtian comfort, and a pre-

preservative of me all my dayes; and can I absent my self from it at any time, when I have occasion of receiving? Or if I once, or seldom absent my self from it, yet can I possibly live in the neglect of it? It is certain if I do, nothing of reason, Christianity, nor sense of my own interest can move me. Suppose Christ himself should speak from heaven (and so he doth by his word and Ministry) suppose when I turn my back upon that prepared table, he should call to me from above: You I died for you, I commanded you when dying in remembrance of that my death, to eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, the benefit thereof is greater than you conceive I have here commissionated my servants to give it you, here it stands prepared for you, my Church commands, invites, doth all possibly to bring you to it, can you turn your back upon this body, this bloud of mine? Is it nothing to you, that it was given for you? nothing that

Chap. 2.

Chap. 2. it is now offered to be given to you? Do you expect pardon, and grace, and life everlasting by it, and can you neglect it? What answer could I make? Can I think in my conscience I should not be ashamed of making this? Lord, the Church professeth she thinks, to receive kneeling is a reverence befitting so sacred matter: I think that reverence to be too much, (though there be neither express Scripture nor evident reason for it) And, because I may not be so irreverent as I think fit, I will not come. In short: All objections I can make of things of this nature are either pure cavils, or matters very uncertain and disputable. The thing urged is a certain and undoubted duty: Now, am I just to my reason, or at all truly conscientious, if for matters dubious, (which (if the Church know more than I, as in good manners I am bound to think) are safe) I neglect so undoubted, weighty and beneficial a duty?

¶ It

¶ It can be no excuse to me, that I come not because I am not prepared, since to be unprepared is my sin: and to say I wanted time to prepare my self, is as much as to say, I am not at leasure to be a Christian. I cannot therefore but see my self in conscience bound frequently to communicate, and it is fit I consult how frequently. Chap. 3.

Chap. III.

How often a Christian ought to partake of the Lords Supper, and at what age to begin.

NOw because nothing can be done often, which doth not once begin to be done, therefore this Question *how often* ought I to resort unto the Lords Table, includes this, (which it is meet be first answered) *How soon* shall I come hither, or at *what age*.

Chap. 3. To this the Orders of our Church seem to answer, at *Sixteen* years of age. But then, that passage is to be interpreted by others, which require that all persons now growing adult, be *confirmed* before their admission to the Lords Supper. So that the true answer to this Question depends upon the right understanding of *Confirmation*, of which briefly.

It is agreed by all sober men (though possibly otherwise of different perswasions) that there should be some solemn transition from our Infant Membership to our Adult, that is, from our being Christian Children, and as it were under age to our being reckon'd riper, and as it were Christians of our selves. To this purpose it is requisite, that being baptized in our infancy, when we could not personally take upon us the vow and profession of Christianity, which was made in our names by others, we by our own choice openly take this

this vow and profession on our Chap. 5.
selves. This the Church of *England* binds all to, in binding them to be confirm'd, as is evident by the Office of Confirmation: and after such assumption of this profession, and vow on themselves (following therein pure, and primitive antiquity) she orders that they receive a Blessing from the Bishop by imposition of his hands, after which they are reputed adult Members, and have a full right to all the Ordinances of the Gospel.

According to the true intent of this wholesome Order (whatever is practised contrary (though indeed we are not to reckon every Episcopal Benediction to be properly Confirmation, and so not the intent of the Church contrariated so often as otherwise we might suspect) every person to be confirmed, is supposed to have been so far instructed, *privately* by his Parents or Godfathers, and Godmothers, and more *publickly* catechi-

Chap. 3. zed by the Miniſter, yea, and taught to underſtand the words, and ſenſe of the Catechiſme, that he is in ſome competent meaſure, able to give account of his faith; not poſſibly by declaring it in a long formal Oration, but by anſwering (as to the ſubſtance) ſuch few plain matters as are immediately requiſite to Salvation. And that this is the Churches intent, that all perſons come thus qualified to confirmation, both the *Rubrick* precedent, and the *Preface* unto the office of Confirmation abundantly teſtifie. Now inaſmuch as till ſuch their Confirmation, and conſequently ſuch foregoing aptneſs, and underſtanding, young perſons are not to be admitted to the Lords Supper, it is evident that the mind of our Church in anſwer to this queſtion is in ſhort this. Every perſon when come now to ſuch competent years of diſcretion, that he underſtands the main neceſſary matters of Chriſtian faith, (in which his

his own word is not to be taken, but trial to be made by the Governours, or Ministers of the Church) is to make a solemn Profession of his owning the vow of his Baptisme, and of Christian faith in manner above intimated, and after this to be admitted to, and henceforth to frequent the Lords Supper. Now this the generality of people (supposing them Christianly brought up, and instructed) may be well able to do about Sixteen years of age. About it, I say, for it is not to be thought the Church intended critically to insist upon two or three Months. Chap. 3.

But in case at sixteen years old, any are unable to give such account of Christianity, as mentioned; I see not that our Church admits them to confirmation, much less to the Holy Communion. Yet is it by the way, most justly injoyned that all of Sixteen not communicating be presented, to the end, that if any of that age are not duely in-

Chap. 3.

ſtructed, both they, and thoſe who have, or have had the care of them, may be admoniſhed they ſuffer not their growing farther up in ſuch ignorance, and unchriſtian neglects.

¶ Now as to the frequent iterations of my addreſſes unto the Lords Table, by what I have above meditated touching the obligations which call me thither; I cannot but conclude, it is my duty to embrace every opportunity, which is given me: nor can I juſtifie any turning my back upon it, when God by his Miniſters invites me thereto, my unpreparedneſs is my fault, it can be no excuſe. True indeed, if unprepared I may not in any wiſe preſume to come: but in caſe of my abſtaining, becauſe unprepared, I am to account and bewail that as a double ſin, the one of neglecting the Lords Supper, the other of being in ſuch an unchriſtian temper, that I was unfit for it, and could not without venturing my ſelf upon

damnation perform my Chri- Chap. 3.
stian duty. In most congregations at present, this Sacrament is so often administred, that all the Parishioners may partake thereof four times a year: but for my part, I see not how I can approve that mans spirit, who could be content with it eight times a year, if with convenience and order he could have it oftner: And I beseech God not to lay to the charge of this Nation the great neglects of this the chief of evangelical Ordinances, and highest advancement of the Christian soul on this side Heaven.

Chap. IV.

Considerations to move to such care, and Seriousness in receiving, as that we may receive worthily.

THis the eminency and dignity of this holy Mystery now mentioned, is a fit consideration to move me to the greatest care and seriousness possible therein; which will preserve me from the second ordinary miscarriage of inconsiderateness and consequent *unworthiness* at the Lords Table.

1. For, shall I be heedless, and vain in the highest, and most heavenly Ordinance? Am I convinced that I ought not to pray to God, or hear his word with an unprepared, or inconsiderate mind, much less with an heart regarding inwardly iniquity: and can I tolerate such a frame

frame of ſpirit at the Lords Table? Chap. 4.
Doth the Prophet tell the houſe of *Iſrael*, that *every man of them who ſet up his idols in his heart, and put the ſtumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and came to the Prophet, him* who thus came, *the Lord would anſwer according to the multitude of his idols, and take him in his own heart*, that is, him who came to hear from the Prophet with a corrupt and wicked heart, having not before laid aſide his luſt, and ungodly intentions by an impartial reſolution of his duty (which could only turn *the ſtumbling block of his iniquities* out of his heart) him the Lord would entertain with all that diſpleaſure which belonged to all the multitude of his abominations? Was this the entertainment of ſuch? how infinitely diſpleaſed then will he be at me if I come, not to receive his word from his Prophet, but the body and bloud of his Son with ſuch an heart as would provoke him not Ezek 14. 4.

onely

Chap. 4. onely in any meaner sacred action, but in my common life, and when to this my real ungodlineſs, and rottenneſs of heart, I at once adde the greateſt *preſumption*, in daring to come whither none but holy perſons are invited, and the greateſt *hypocriſie*, in pretending by ſuch coming I am of the number of thoſe, who have cleanſed their hearts that they may be meet guests at ſo sacred a feaſt.

¶ Further, Let me take into conſideration the vaſte advantages of having worthily received. It being ſuppoſed that I come with a meet heart, God by this Sacrament both beſtows, and ſeals to me all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and the blood of my Saviour.

1. He thereby gives me of his Grace and Spirit, the true bread of life which feeds my Soul to happineſs; that is, he really communicates to me a ſupernatural ſtrength, whereby I may be able, if I will make uſe of it, to reſiſt and

over-

overcome all temptations, to master Chap. 4.
all my lusts, to perform every duty of devotion to God, of Justice, and Charity to my neighbour, and of temperance, and self denial as to my self; to perform all those, I say, and that in a most lively and spiritual sort, which I endeavouring to do, by exercise of this the grace of God, shall grow up in all Christian vertues, and comfortably still advance till I come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: I shall be as a tree planted in the Courts of God, ever green and flourishing, and full of fruit: and being so, shall be the delight of Heaven, and the joy of holy Angels, and a comfort to my self all my dayes.

2. God further hereby makes over to me, and bestows on me the pardon of all my sins, the merits of his Son, and a full right to be in his Kingdom of Glory a co-heir with him, to whom I am by this Sacrament most intimately united. As he gives

Chap. 4. gives me my Lords body, the ſpiritual Bread of his Grace to ſtrengthen my inward man, (as before conſidered) ſo alſo his blood, to waſh both ſoul and body from all original and contracted guilt, and to preſent them ſpotleſs, as that blood, in which they appear, before the throne of God: and being thus waſhed and purified, the merits of that blood are mine, even heaven, and eternal life, which God hereby I ſay, makes over to me.

3. This the body and blood of my Saviour myſtically and ſpiritually thus received by me turns even to my very body a ſeed of immortality, and of reſurrection to eternal life. For, *As in Adam all died, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*; and particularly it is by union with the body of Chriſt; yea, even while they ſleep in the duſt, that the bodies of Saints ſhall enjoy an happy reſurrection; and this union is by no means more intimately effected than by this Sacrament. And thus much

1 Cor. 15. 22.

much the Christian Church hath from the Primitive dayes believed. *Ignatius* whose epistles came in the ancient Church next in authority to the Apostolical ones, as they did in antiquity, calls the elements thus received a *potion of immortality*, and *an antidote against death*, that is, against the power and final prevalence of it. Chap. 4. *In Epistol. ad Ephes.*

Lastly, as God hereby gives and makes over all those benefits, so he seals to the faithful heart this his gift, ensures, and ascertains it as of his present giving the Spirit, and pardon to it, so of his future granting an happy resurrection, and eternal life: And what more firm and precious Seal can he set thereto, than this, that he makes us partakers of the body and bloud of his Son, as a pledge of our being at present in his favour and loves, and of our certain future being in his Bosome, and Kingdom? It is certain by the constant experience of all devout and serious Christians

Chap. 4. stians, that there is no means under heaven which fills them with more assured confidence of Glory, with higher transports of holy joyes, and fownes of comforts, than doth the meet participation of this sacred Mystery. It gives them such holy lifts to the throne of their glorified Saviour whom they feed on, that they scarce know whether they are not there, and are ready to call out with that sweet Singer of our *Israel*:

Give me my captive Soul, or take
My Body also thither:
Another lift like this would make
Them but two to be together.

The consideration of all which, as it should beget in me an holy appetite and hunger after this heavenly cheer; so it cannot, if duely considered, but make me very serious, and devout in my approaches, inasmuch as it is certain, all those benefits are mist, and it is only an empty feast, if I receive unworthily.

But yet there is somewhat else which

which may further move me to the highest care herein, to wit, besides the *loss* of so great good, the vast, and almost unparaleld *danger* of coming unworthily. There are but two things which make dangers great; the eminency of the evil incurr'd, and the subjectness to incurr it, and both points are very considerable in the present case. Chap. 4

1. There is scarce in all the Scripture an expression which bears such a terrible import of certain damnation or judgement, as doth that of *eating and drinking damnation to our selves.* It would seem to intimate a mans having swallowed his own condemnation. And what sin, saving only the unpardonable sin, do we judge more hainous than the betraying and crucifying the Lord of life? What wretch like *Judas*? Now the Apostle in a manner placeth all unworthy receivers in a parity of guilt with him, when he saith, *Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup unworthily, shall be* 1 Cor. 11. 1 Cor. 11.

Chap. 4. *guilty of the body and bloud of the Lord.* Guilty: if not of the *crucifying afresh the Lord of life, and putting him to open shame*, yet of *treading under foot the Son of God, and counting the bloud of the Covenant*, wherewith onely he can be sanctified *an unholy thing*. The Christian Church only believes touching this sin, that by deep repentance, and amendment it is pardonable (that bloud having of old healed even those who spilt it) but that certainly it is a sin of the highest nature next to that of despite, or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. True, the guilt is greater, or less according to the knowledge, and means which the peccant persons have had to have prepared themselves, but in all certainly very great. And as the danger is thus great, by reason the guilt thus incurred is so certain, and so grievous, so is it by reason of our subjectness to incurr it. What experience have I of the base slightiness, and sloath

Heb. 6. 6.

Heb. 10. 29.

of

of mine own heart? How apt am I to slubber over Devotions, and to dispense with lame preparations? And can I think the enemy whoever watches to plunge me in the deepest guilt will not be ready to help on my facility towards perfunctorines, when he is sure it will involve me in such wretched guilt? Considering this therefore, that I take the ready course to ensure mine own condemnation, If I come unworthily, and that partly of my own nature, partly by instigation of mine enemy, I am prone thus to presume upon my own ruine, ought I not to be awakened to the highest care and seriousnes of devotion in this matter? Chap. 4.

Chap.

Chap. V.

In what points that care consists, which he must take, who would be a worthy Communicant?

BUt what care is that, which will secure me from this danger, and what are the particulars of that Devotion, which will render me a worthy Communicant?

In answer hereunto it is certain, *First*, that if I come not with a truly penitent, faithful, thankful and charitable heart, honestly resolved upon impartial endeavours of future holiness. I come to this Sacrament unworthily; care therefore must be taken before hand that I come with this *wedding garment* to this seal of the *Espousals* between my Lord, and my soul.

And *Secondly*, it is as certain, that if I behave my self with lightness, vanity, or dulness: or in any sort but

but with the intention, and height of present devotion, I behave my self unworthily there. Care therefore must be taken that my mind be thus kept at home, and intent upon this heavenly feast, while I am there to feed thereon. Chap. 5.

And *Lastly*, It is no less certain that if after reception hereof, I remit my diligence, and thinking now, as to all which is past, I have made even with God, begin to take to my self more liberty of life than what before receiving, I could judge tolerable, or any otherwise grow heedless of my vows; I render my self consequently an unworthy receiver. Care therefore must be had of my future carriage, and ways that they answer my engagements.

Now as to directions in all these points, they may be fetcht from that most excellent book, *The whole duty of man*, where they are very faithfully and plainly laid down. (A book which he who writes

Chap. 6. Partit. 3. writes this, as he loves his soul, commends to his Reader.) Notwithstanding, lest every reader should not have it at hand, and lest the present work should be more imperfect, brief consideration shall be taken of each point, and First, of what is fit to be done by way of preparation.

Chap. VI.

Of more remote Preparation. the Doctrine of the Lords Supper briefly opened.

IN order to my taking a perfect account what my particular preparation should be for the Lords Supper, It is meet I consider with my self, whether I have formerly received it, or whether now at first I come thereto. And if I have formerly received, whether I now think in my conscience, I came thereto

thereto duly prepared or no. If either now first come to receive, or now first seriously set my self (deeply bewailing my former unworthiness) to endeavour approving my self a worthy receiver, my first care must be that I understand the doctrine of this holy Mystery, which it will be most proper for me to fetch out of that good practical Book (containing the substance of Christian duties) which I am above supposed to have chosen to my self to read, and make my own. But if any have it not better, and more at large, the substance of it is briefly this. Chap. 8.

All mankind having sinned, and so forfeited that happiness which the first Covenant promised only to unsinning, and perfect obedience, were in a state of present and future misery, when it pleased God out of his meer goodness, to promise, and in fulness of time, to send us a Redeemer, who should suffer for us what we were to suffer, and

by

Chap. 6. by his bloud establish a new covenant between God and us, on those terms, that if we would uniformly and impartially receive the Gospel, that gracious rule of life which he should deliver unto us, yielding thereunto the obedience of faith, and persevering therein this faith, through the merits of our Saviour, shou'd be reckoned unto us for righteousness, all our sins, through the same his merits, should be forgiven, and a Crown of everlasting life, which by his bloud he purchased to all who should prove thus faithful unto the end, should be given unto us. And this, that we on our part might be able to fulfill, he not onely in his own good time most clearly revealed what he required of us, prest with the most powerful motives and incentives to commend it to us, but sent his Spirit both to incline, and enable us to what God, and our own happiness, according to these terms required of us. And that we might be assured

assured that he on his part would perform what he had promised, he appointed certain solemn and religious Rites to be observed by us, which as often as we should come unto, we should vow to do our part, and he, under our use of that religious Rite, would both impart to us strength to perform that our vow, and seal unto us our pardon of all that should be then past, and of future salvation, the things which he on his part promised. These religious Rites we call Sacraments: so that in short our Church most fully and plainly defines a Sacrament to be, *An outward and visible sign* [or token] *of an inward and spiritual grace given*, [or thereby conveighed unto us] *ordained by Christ himself* [so that it is not in the power of man or of the Church to ordain Sacraments] *as a means whereby we receive the same* [viz. whereby we receive the Grace of Gods Spirit for the sanctification of our hearts, and the pardon of our sins] *and a*

Chap.

Chap. 6. *pledge to assure us thereof*, that is, of his pardoning our sins, and continuing such the Grace of his Spirit unto us. Or shorter, A Sacrament *is a Seal of the Covenant* of Grace; on our parts of the Vow of Evangelical Obedience, and on Gods part of his giving unto us his Spirit, the pardon of our sins, all things good for us, and finally eternal life.

¶ Of these Sacraments we acknowledge but two, (because Christ ordained no more, and no one ought to appoint Seals of the Covenant, but he who made it.) The first whereof is Baptisme, by which we vow obedience, and receive such grace, and pardon as mentioned. This Vow of our Baptisme, forasmuch as if we live to discretion, or active years, we through humane frailty and our own corruptions, and otherwise break, there is a second Seal, or Sacrament, which acknowledging our breaches of our former Vow, we are to come unto and resume, and renew our Vow, and God accordingly

accordingly renews his promise of grace, and pardon, and eternal life unto us, and communicates further strength for the performance of what on our part concerns us. The outward signs are Bread and Wine, the things signified, the Body and Bloud of Christ: The breaking of the Bread typifies the breaking and rending of our Lords Body on the Cross: The pouring out of the Wine the shedding his Bloud in his Crucifixion. Nor are his Body and Bloud hereby onely signified, but also conveighed to the faithful soul. So those words of the Consecration assure us. *This is my body* *: Not this bread is my body; but this *taking and eating* is my body, that is, (as the *Apostle St. *Paul* expounds it) the *Communion*, or participation of my Body. This Bread and Wine being blessed, and distributed according to his command, God doth thereby as truly conveigh and give to every faithful Receiver

* See Pract. Lib. 6. * Sect. 1st. 1 Cor. 10. 16.

Chap. 6. the Body and Bloud of Christ, that is, the crucified Saviour, as the Minister gives him those elements. As truly, I say, he gives him the Crucified Saviour, but not bodily but mystically: Nor must we conceive the Body of our Saviour to move from its place, or come out of heaven; but his Body and Bloud is given unto us, and we receive them, (*verily* and *indeed* saith our Church) not in our *mouths* but *souls*, that is, we receive our Saviour as crucified, we receive our share of right in his body, and bloud, and all the powers, vertues, benefits, and fruits thereof, especially those before mentioned, of spiritual strength, and pardon, and eternal life.

By this plain view of the doctrine of the Lords Supper, I cannot but see what I am to expect at the Lords Table, that is, I am prepared (in the Apostles language) to *discern the Lords body*; and some light is given into what I must do by way of further

ther preparation; For being I am to renew my Covenant with heaven, it first concerns me to examine, how I have broken it. Chap. 7.

Chap. VII.

Of more proximate Preparation for the Lords Supper.

THe particular and more immediate preparation for the Lords Supper, the Apostle calls *Examining a mans self*. And the first thing, whereof I am to examine my self, is, whether I have knowledge sufficient to *discern the Lords body*; that is, whether I understand the doctrine of it or no. If I do not, I ought to refrain till I have duly informed my self; which I may not by any means long delay. The next thing to be examined I already see to be, my sins, the breaches of 1 Cor. 11.

Chap. 7. my Covenant with God. Now my examination of my self as to these, is onely in order to the endeavour of *godly sorrow*, and that in order to *work repentance*. And the particular practice of all these I have above considered: thither therefore I am to return, and in the order laid down there, to endeavour sincerely to sue out the pardon of my sins, considering them, and their aggravations, to move me to sorrow and contrition for them; studying how to mortifie the habits of them, resolving upon the use of such means as God directs me to, endeavouring, as far as possible, the making amends to any I have wronged; and, to compleat all, betaking my self to God in prayer, by confessing my several sins to him, and beseeching and depending upon him for pardon through the bloud of Christ. All this I comprise under the name of *Penitential Devotions*: and as the examination of my self naturally leads me hereunto,

Pr. Devo. Part. 4. Chap. 6. Sect. 4, 5, 6, &c.

unto, so is this a part of preparation most undispensibly necessary for the Lords Supper. And for the performance of this, it is not to be thought an hour or two are sufficient. It is very necessary, that before my approaching to the Lords Table, I have for a good space set up such a weekly course of humiliation of my self, as hath been above consulted of, if my leasure and condition of life will bear it. Then may I have particularly looked over my life, and understood my self some considerable time beforehand, so that I shall not have my repentance wholly to begin, but onely to iterate and further compleat. Chap. 7. *Pr. devot. Part.* 4.

But if I cannot obtain of my self or affairs so much leasure for Devotion so long before, yet supposing I am now the first time to communicate, if I consider the work I have to do, I cannot well begin to think of examining my self and beginning my *Penitentials* later,

Chap. 7. than a fortnight before my intended Receiving: Not that my devotions must take up the whole time, but that being several and frequent times in examination of my self, and if possibly keeping three or four Fasting-dayes (at some distance one from another) for this purpose of particular viewing my life, and distinctly considering, bewailing, confessing and resolving against my sins, I may be sure to have made through-work, to have repented of, and shut out of my soul all my known iniquities, and so be able with a clear conscience to approach this holy mystery. To this purpose (though I should commend it to all new Communicants, yet especially to such, who have less time and liberty for their devotion) do I commend Easter as the fittest time for first receiving, by reason of the foregoing Fasts of the Church; which whether all Families do observe, or no, it is certain that on some of them they are call-

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ed to the publick Service of God, and particularly to confeſſions, and humiliation of themſelves, and not ſuffer'd (the whole dayes at leaſt) to labour. And theſe Faſts and dayes of publick prayers in Lent, if the new Communicant obſerve, and in the ſerious fear of God deal plainly with his own heart, he may well be ſuppoſed, by Good-Friday at night, to have in a good meaſure diſcharged the view of his life and Penitential Devotions. However I would ſo caſt it, that the Friday before that Lords-day, on which I firſt communicate, I might have viewed and lamented the ſumme of my ſins, and in my Saturday devotions rather have my repentance to look over and more complete, than to begin, or a great part to do. Being then ſuppoſed to have examined my ſelf, as to my knowledge, and as to my ſins, (and to have endeavour'd to make up all breaches between God and me, under which is comprized reconciling my ſelf to

Chap. 7.

Chap. 7. my offended neighbour (as before said in the particular practice of repentance) the next matter of which I am to examine my self, which should be my work on *Saturday*-evening, is the present state and temper of my mind, whether is that such as is fit to bring to the Lords Table? Now, that I shall know hereby: is my heart tender and affectionate, disposed to those Christian graces which I am there to act? *viz.*

1. To relentings for my sins, purposes against them, and resolves of Holy life?

2. To humble dependances, and trust on God in my Saviours bloud for pardon?

3. To Spiritual joy and thankfulness?

4. To good will towards all men, charity, and liberality?

If I find my self disposed to these Holy affections, I am in a fit temper to approach the Lords Table. If I find these dispositions wanting,

I am (1.) Seriously to bewail it. (2.) To look over my former preparations; possibly those have been so slighly: some sin may yet lie unrepented of, which hardens my heart; and if any such I find, to repent of it particularly: if none such found, (3.) an affectionate and tender temper is to be endeavoured by prayer, reading, and meditation. Especially, let me read and meditate the story of my Saviours passion, reflecting still on his Innocency, and my own Being of the guilty number, the punishment of all whose sins he bore. But if all will not melt my heart, it being supposed that all my penitential devotions by way of preparation have been honestly performed, let me not for this the hardness of my heart forbear communicating. Possibly the stone is so hard, nothing but my Saviours bloud will soften it. To that therefore let me resolve to repair, yet not so as to intermit the use of any means, and especi- Chap. 7

Chap. 7. ally of frequent prayer, to dispose my heart in that holy sort, and to those holy affections above named, which I ought to carry with me to the Lords Table. And here, though to hit the condition of every soul be impossible, yet may it not be unprofitable to consider of such a form of preparatory prayer as may be fit for me on the *Saturday* evening, and *Sunday* morning, before I communicate, to add to my former devotions (which are not by reason of my having been frequent in prayer to be remitted, but rather intended.) And such an one is this;

O Father of Mercies, who from the beginning hast been in Christ, reconciling the world to thy self, and to ensure as well as complete this reconciliation, hast called the faithful to the Communion of the body and bloud of him thy Son, that true passeover, who

who tasted death for every man. With what holy Hands, and pure and heavenly Heart, ought I to receive this the food of life which comes down from Heaven? Yet, Lord, how vile and polluted am I? my very preparations need repentance, and my tears sorrow. And besides the insufficiency of my repentance (which I beseech thee in the bloud of Jesus to pardon) I have other miserable defects and distempers, which, Lord, if thou wilt not remove, I am like to bring with me to thy Table. An exceeding dull heart I carry, very far unbroken for my sins, unaffected too with that zeal of love and thankfulness towards thee, of charity and goodwill towards Mankind; which

Chap. 7.

Chap. 7. which I ought to bring thither with me. That Trust and Dependance which I exercise on thy Mercy in Christ, I have reason to fear may be too presumptuous. But Lord thou knowest I have endeavoured to mourn over, and repent of my sins: I have vowed to have respect unto all thy Commandments, and not to regard any iniquity in my heart. These my vows of Holy life, I have ready to seal at thy Table. Oh that thou by the bloud and spirit of thy Son wouldest seal me to the day of redemption, pardoning all my past sins, and by the power of thy Grace, preserving me from future backslidings. Make this blessed Sacrament a feast of fat things unto my soul. Vouch-

safe me thereby larger communications of grace and comfort than ever yet I received. And to that end, at present throughly wash me from the guilt of all my sins in the bloud of my Saviour; from the guilt of all I know, and have confessed; and from the guilt of all my secret and unknown transgressions. O Lord, if there be any unseen iniquity of mine, which is like to interpose and hinder good things from me, reveal and discover that to thy servant, that by serious repentance thereof, he may obtain the washing of it away, and may draw near with a true heart, sprinkled from all evil conscience. And, Lord, let thy Spirit go along with me, impowering me from above, and Chap. 7

Chap. 7. and at those instants when I shall receive that bread of life and drink of that cup of the New Testament in my Saviours bloud; let my heart so relent for all my sins, be so inflamed with fervor of Holy resolutions, of faith, love, gratitude, and most Christian Charity, that I may in nothing behave my self unworthily: Hear, O Lord, and remember thy servant for good, through that bloud which he longs to be sprinkled and satisfied with. *Amen.*

One thing here let me admonish young Communicants of (youth being hot and more ready to vow than faithful to pay) that they do not through imprudent zeal intangle themselves in too severe and inconsiderate vows at the Lords Table. All known sin must be resolved

solved and vowed against: all known duty resolved for, and the endeavour of it with utmost strength, vowed: Yea, the means of avoiding and mortifying sins, (according as we have in our Christian prudence, consulted of them) must be resolved on. But here we must be wary that by particular vows against some matters in themselves innocent; we do not tie up our selves so strictly from that liberty, which God hath left us (and we had better have studied to have used Christianly than vowed totally to abridge our selves of) that we either repent afterwards, or prove unfaithful to our vows. Chap. 7.

But to return. Having with some such Prayer as this above closed up my evening Devotions, let me be very careful of my carriage afterwards, lest I any wise disturb so much as I have obteined of a good temper. To this purpose, let me order all my next daies affairs (especially if I have any command or con-

Chap. 7 considerable service in a family) that my heart and hands receive as little disturbance or avocations from them as may be; which when I have done, let me cheerfully commit my self to sleep with all convenient earliness.

And as it is my duty constantly and ought ever to be my care (as being of most wholsome and comfortable influence) to sleep and wake with the thoughts of God, fresh and neerest to my heart, so surely cannot I but think my self concerned at present to close and open my waking eyes with Divine thoughts and ejaculations: which if I do, I am now devoutly come to the morning of that day, on which I hope to receive the Sun of Righteousness into my soul, everlastingly to enlighten, cherish, and in the end, glorifie it.

With convenient earliness then I rise, and applying my self seasonably to my Devotions, in my morning meditations, I shall find thus much

much new covenient to be added. Chap. 7

1. That I consider afresh (for I am not now supposed first to do that, if I have practised foregoing rules) how I may with due Devotion behave my self at the Lords Table, and what are those particular duties and graces, which there I am to exercise (of which in the following Chapter.)

2. That, I set apart and devote somewhat to be offer'd to God at the Lords Table for the use of the poor, or maintenance of those who are not otherwise provided for. It is evident by Apostolick order this ought not to be omitted. *On the first day of the week* (*viz.* when they *assembled together to break bread*) *as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye. Let every one lay by him in store as God hath prospered you.* And this was of old so plentiful, that besides that it sufficed to make a feast *which they called a Feast of love*, at which, poor as well as rich, after the Lords 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

Supper

Chap. 7. Supper, refresht themselves (and of which we evidently read the abuse in 1 *Cor.* 11. 20. *&c.*) it relieved poor Christians, maintained the Ministry who were not otherwise provided for, and did many other publick goods. I ought not therefore either to do this too sparingly, or in any wise omit it, if able. I am further

3. To enquire afresh into the temper of my heart, and endeavour to bring it to such due disposition as before spoken of. And

Lastly, To add to my morning Prayers in private, some earnest petitions for the assistance of Gods Spirit, and a due frame of mind in participation of these holy Mysteries: in which case helps and directions have been above considered, and are to be used as I find it with my self.

If after all this done, I have any spare time before my appearance in publick, I may well spend it in reading over the Communion-Service, (which

(which if a young Communicant, I may be conceived not much vers'd in) by which means I shall be able with more readiness, intelligence, and devotion to go along in it at the publick ministration. If I sufficiently understand this, the reading the Story of my Saviours Passion, and all along applying and (as I ought ever when I read it) reflecting upon my self, as being one of these guilty wretches for whom he suffer'd all this, and who upon my honest faith shall have my share in all the benefits and merits thereof, will be seasonable and profitable employment for those spare minutes, and odd ends of time, which I have vacant. Chap. 7.

Hitherto of the course of my preparatory devotions supposing me now the first time a guest at the Lords Supper. My work will be much the same upon all my returns thereto; onely, possibly, I may not be able to spare, nor haply shall find it in such strictness necessary to spend,

Chap. 7. ſpend, alwayes ſo much time in the reviſing all my life, and particularly lamenting all my old ſins upon every return to the Lords Table: Inaſmuch as, if I am duly careful after my firſt receiving, I ſhall obſerve ſome certain fixed time of calling my ſelf to account of my carriage, and humbling my ſelf for my miſcarriages; and by that means be better verſt in the particular knowledge of my wayes, and keep all ſtraiter between God and me. Notwithſtanding, two dayes before my intended returning to the Lords Table it is very fit (though I am an old communicant) I begin to think of preparing my ſelf: one of which dayes I ſhould be ſure to keep as a Faſt, and that with ſomething more than ordinary ſolemnity; touching which and my penitential work thereon, I have above conſidered. And as touching the reſt of my preparations in bringing my ſpirit into a due temper, and diſpoſing it to ſuch Chriſtian graces as I am to exer-

exercise at my receiving, I cannot be now at a loss after such particular consideration as hath been above taken, and is now proceeding with. Chap. 8.

Chap. VIII.

Of Christian Duties at the Lords Table.

IT remains now that having duly prepared my self in all the particulars above mentioned, (in none of which as I tender my soul and the benefits of worthy receiving, must I be careless) I consider so of my duties at this holy Table, that no misbehaviour here render me unworthy.

Having devoutly (in the order * formerly propounded) gone through the foregoing service of God in the Church, (Prayers and Sermon) coming now up towards the Lords Table, I gravely take my place, * *Pr. Dev. Part 3. Chap. 8.*

Chap. 8. place: and till the assembly be all placed, it is far better for me to be upon my knees, and at my prayers, than allow my eyes to gaze, and so my mind to wander.

But the prayers beginning again, it is very improper for me to be at, or proceed with, any private prayers of mine own. Joyn I must with the Congregation, and particularly heeding every passage, put my heart thereto: And the contrary is reprehended as an intollerable disorder by the Apostle in the Corinthian Church: *How is it* (saith he) *brethren? when ye come together, and every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine*, &c. When one is singing, another is minding exhortations, another prayers, &c. *Let all things be done to edifying*: this then he thought an unedifying course: Yea not onely as to all the words and substance of the prayers and exhortations going before the Consecration of the Elements, but even to every passage and particular Cere-

Ceremony in the conſecration let me keep my mind attentive; forasmuch as all of them have their meaning and reaſon, and do tend to edification. Particularly the Sacramental actions on the part of the Miniſter, to be by me heeded and underſtood are, Chap. 8.

1. *Taking of the Bread and taking of the Cup*, both uſed by our *Lord*, which are nothing elſe but a ſolemn ſeparation of the Bread and Wine from common and ordinary uſe. Thus was the Lamb to be *taken out*, ſet apart *from the Flock*. And that which is ſignified hereby is Gods eternal ſetting apart and deſtinating the Lord Chriſt to this office of being our Saviour; in reſpect of which, he is called the *Lamb, ſlain from the foundation of the world*. Exod. 12. 3. Rev. 13 8.

2. The Bleſſing, *the Bread and Wine*, repreſents God the Father, ſanctifying and furniſhing our Lord Chriſt, as to his humane nature, with all gifts neceſſary for the dis-

Chap. 8. charge of the office of our Redeemer; his blessing him *with the Spirit above measure*.

Of the breaking of the Bread, and pouring out of the Wine, the signification is obvious and above touched.

3. *The Bread and Wine thus taken, and blest, broken, and poured out,* are distributed to each by the Minister. *The giving* of them denotes Gods giving Christ, and Christs giving himself to us; and the particular distribution of them to each, the particular respect had to each, and the particular application of Christ unto each; and not of a piece of Christ to one, or a piece to the other, but unto each of all Christ. And further, As the Bread and Wine are not only given to us, but given to us with this design, that we eat the one and drink the other, so doth God give the crucified Saviour to us at present, whose *Flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed*, for the spiritual nourishment

Joh. 6. 55.

ment of our ſouls and growth in Grace. Theſe are the Sacramental actions on the part of the Miniſter: Others there are on the receivers part; to wit, their *taking and eating*, and *taking and drinking*. Their taking, ſignifies their particular laying hold on Chriſt by truſt and faith, their flying to, and apprehending him, as the means of their ſalvation, and pardon of their ſins, and dependance on him accordingly. *Their eating and drinking* ſignifies the cloſe and intimate union of them to Chriſt; for as our meat paſſes into our ſubſtance, and is moſt intimately united to us, ſo are we hereby ſealed and made, as it were, *fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone*. Chap. 8.

All theſe matters ought I to be meditating, according as every particular gives me proper occaſion, and the attending unto every particular paſſage, is that which is the proper devotion at this time required of me. Not ſo, but that I may

Chap. 8. and ought to send up many ejaculations to God intermixt with these meditations, which I shall have the best opportunities for, while the Communion is administring to others. Then especially, if there be no Psalm singing, I may well recollect my vows and resolutions of Holiness, which in my private humiliations of my self, I have made, and beg Divine grace, to enable me to keep them; and otherwise address my self to God, as my Christian prudence and devotion shall suggest. But certainly to spend my time purely in private prayer, so as in their season not to attend to these Sacramental actions, or the chief of them at least, is very improper and disorderly.

In these exercises of my devotion in this order and method, am I supposed to await till it comes to my turn to receive the holy Bread, which when I receive, and am now feeding on, I imploy my soul in some such ejaculation as this.

Chap. 3.

I *bleſs thee O Father, for my Saviour and Lord the Holy Jeſus. I adore thee O Lord Chriſt with thine eternal Spirit.* I acknowledge and believe thy body to have been crucified and broken by thy Fathers wrath for me; beſeeching thee that through the ſame, this body of mine may be ſealed to an holy and eternal life; and withall devoteing my ſelf to thee by ſolemn vow, which by eating here at thy Table I ſeal, with all my ſoul and ſtrength to ſerve thee all my days. Let thy grace O Lord, be ſufficient for me.

¶ When I have now eaten, and during ſuch eating, thus applied my ſelf to God, it may poſſibly ſo come to paſs, that the generality of the Aſſembly is ſinging: if there-

Chap. 8. fore the *Pſalm* be pertinent and ſenſe (as it is to be lamented many which are ſung in the Church are ſcarcely ſo) it is meet I joyn with them: if it be not, I ſee not how I can joyn with them any further, than by praiſing God in my mind, by meditating in ſuch pertinent ſenſe as poſſibly the tranſlators of the *Pſalms* have corrupted. I am ſure God requires me not to praiſe him in what is not ſenſe, or ſo pitiful that my judgement cannot attend to, but nauſeate: nor doth our Church injoyn it; the Metrical tranſlation of the *Pſalms* being only allowed and tolerated, not at all impoſed. I ſay therefore, I muſt be ſure to employ my ſoul in ſeaſonable holy Meditations of Chriſts ſufferings, the benefits thereof, of my union with Chriſt by this Sacrament, or the like: and thus meditating, wait till it comes to my turn to drink of that holy Cup: which when I take into my hand, that verſe of the *Pſalm* may well run in my

my mind, *I will take the cup of ſalvation, and call on the name of the Lord:* and, as far as I can, while I drink, however, moſt ſurely when I have drunk thereof, let me ſomewhat more at large lift up my ſoul to God in ſome ſuch ſort as before. Chap. 8.

I Bleſs thee, O Almighty Father, O crucified Saviour, O ſanctifying Spirit, that my ſoul is thus refreſhed. I acknowledge and believe thy bloud, O Holy Jeſus, to have been ſhed for my ſins; let it reſt on me for remiſſion of them, and therein let all my ſins be waſht away, and I ſprinkled from all evil conſcience. Being now made clean, Oh, that I may ſin no more!

Having thus received, in caſe of ſuch *Pſalm* ſung as before allowable. I joyn therein, otherwiſe, I imploy my devotion as I did after

Chap. 8. my partaking of the bread. till all having received, the Church prayers, afterward begin; in which, with the utmoſt fervency of my ſpirit, I praiſe and petition God. And though I ſhould not before theſe have *ſung an hymn*, yet do not I depart from the Lords Table without a very Seraphical *Hymn*, if I devoutly joyn in the Church prayers: for ſuch is that which is ſung or ſaid after the adminiſtration, *Glory be to God on high*, &c.

Before I depart from the Lords Table, I muſt be ſure to make my offerings, I mean, leave ſomewhat for the refreſhing of the poor, as a pledge of my gratitude to him, who hath thus fed my hungering and thirſty ſoul. Having thus done, I depart, prayers being ended, with a ſerious and cheerful heart and countenance. I keep good thoughts in my mind, but yet paſs not ſo reſerved, but that cheerfully ſalute any of my Chriſtian brethren, I have occaſion; remembring in the ancient Church

Church, the Assemblies, especially, after every Communion, parted with an Holy kiss; very seasonable may it be, and a right charitable imitation of the old feasts of *Love to invite* any poor Communicants home to my Table for home now I hasten. Chap. 9.

Chap. IX.

Of duties more immediately and remotely following the reception of the Lords Supper.

AND when I am now come home, I forthwith retire to my privacy for a small space, where my business is *Inquiry* into my selfe and suitable *address* to Heaven.

Two or three things there are, touching which, I cannot but think my selfe obliged to *enquire*. (1.) Touching my own behaviour, both at the Lords Table, and since

Chap. 9. my immediate departure thence. Was I so attentive and devout, as I resolved and prayed I might be? Or was I heedless in many points, and generally dull and unaffected? And since I came from those devotions, have I not by indulgeing wandring thoughts, or vain and worldly discourse, already lost much of the benefit I obteined. (2.) How succeeded all between Heaven and me? What found I of the *quickening* or *comforting* influence of the Holy Ghost? This is that, which they who mean any thing intelligible thereby, mean by communion with God, consisting in nothing else but a mutual agency between the mind of man worshipping God, and God enlivening and affecting it. The mind flies out to him by Heavenly thoughts and desires, and he by his spirit not only heightens that devotion, but fills the mind with hopes and confidences, that its devotion and it self are accepted, and with joys thence conceived,

ceived; which, according to the devotion of the mind, are higher or more moderate, sometimes *unspeakable and full of Glory*. Touching this success, I say, I must inquire, and if upon inquiry made, I find my self to have been dull, and to have felt little or nothing either of the quickenings or joyes of the Holy Spirit, I am (3.) to examine the cause, for undoubtedly it lies on my side; I was either slighty in my preparations, or heedless in my participation, or else there is some other distemper in mine heart (possibly yet unseen by me) which causeth God to keep at a distance, and as it were estrange himself. Suitable to what I find concerning my carriage, success, and present state, should be my address to Heaven; which (though haply, by reason of common affairs, necessarily somewhat brief, yet,) ought to be as affectionate as may be. Possibly, the following form may not be unfit (if for use, yet not) for direction. Chap. 9.

Chap. 9. MY soul and all within me blesseth thee, O Lord my God, for that bread of life, and cup of salvation, from which I now come. What am I that thou shouldest me feed from Heaven, and assume me into so intimate an union with thine Eternal Son? I, who have transgressed all thy Laws, abused thy Mercies, slighted thy Judgements; I, who have refused thy Calls, resisted thy Spirit, broken all my former Covenants with thee: what am I that thou shouldest thus readmit me into so high favour? It is, O Lord, because thy Mercy is above all thy Works, and the riches of thy Grace most inexhaustible, that Mercy and Grace I adore, I admire; Oh, that I may Eternally

nally magnifie! Nothing is there, Lord, in me, but what may provoke thy wrath, and hinder my happineſs. How groſs were my unpreparednesſes for thy Table? How many the wandrings, and how great the dulneſſes of my heart even under my neereſt approaches to thee there? Theſe may juſtly hide thy face from me. And I cannot but bleſs thee, that thou haſt not more eſtranged thy ſelf, and inſtead of hopes of thy favour, ſent me home with a ſenſe of thy wrath. But, Lord, though I am not worthy [* *and have not taſted ſo highly*] of thoſe joyes and comforts of that hidden Manna, which thy choiſe and holier Servants taſte, yet vouchſafe me this benefit by the communion

Chap. 9.

* *Such expreſſions as theſe, are to be uſed as they are found to ſuit with the particular condition of the worſhipper.*

Chap. 9 munion of the body and bloud of thy Son, that I may receive ſuch grace and perpetuated influences of thy Spirit, as may enable me to performe unto thee all my vows; ſo that I never by revolting into any known ſin, unhallow this ſoul and body of mine, which the body and bloud of thy Son hath this day ſanctified; but denying ungodlineſs & worldly luſts, may live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godlily in this preſent world, and in that to come, obtain a bleſſed reſurrection, and ſome (though any mean) ſhare of an inheritance with thy Saints in light, through the merits of my crucified Saviour. *Amen.*

Having in ſome ſuch ſort ſuitably to my condition addreſt myſelf

to

to God, I have closed for the pre- Chap. 9
sent my Communion devotions, and it only remains, that in all my ways hereafter, I remember my renewed Covenant, as judgeing it grievous to violate any one Article of what I have sealed in my Saviours bloud, and to have that abused bloud (through which onely I can have pardon) to be a witness against me. It is certain, that consequent unworthiness (that is, behaving our selves unworthy, and disrespectful of the body and bloud of Christ; after we have partaked thereof is most dangerous: for he, who after his partaking shall from his heart endavour to live worthy, was not undoubtedly an unworthy Communicant; so that future fidelity to my engagements, I cannot but look upon as the most critical point, which constitutes me a worthy receiver. This therefore I must daily mind, and with all my might endeavour; and very much conduceing hereunto I shall find these practices. 1. That

Chap. 9. 1. That I frequently recollect my engagements and vows to God, to the end forgetfulneſs betray me
Pr. Devo. not to the breach of them. To this
Part 4. purpoſe it were very well, if (according to former conſideration) I kept them in writing.

2. That I carefully maintain a conſtant courſe of daily devotion, (ſuch as above deſcribed) and be ſure therein to imploy my heart as well as lips; this will keep in my heart a ſenſe and fear of God, and beſides, derive his grace and bleſſing on me.

3. That I carefully watch and provide againſt, and endeavour throughly to mortifie that ſin or ſins, to which my natural conſtitution or courſe of living is moſt apt to betray me, and by which I have formerly moſt fowly faln. Hence is the greateſt danger to be feared: here therefore ſhould be kept the ſtrongeſt guard.

Chap. X.

Whether a Christian may not worthily communicate without observation in strictness of the former method. Some reflections on dying mens communicating, and conclusion of all.

After this particular consideration of worthy receiving the Lords Supper, the rules laid down being stricter than what most observe, it may possibly be demanded whether a Christian may not communicate worthily, although he should not observe all these rules, especially as to the strictness of preparation, and the quantity of time to be spent therein.

¶ In answer whereunto it must be Premised, (1.) That the spiritual estates and ordinary lives of men

are

Chap. 10. are various. The generality of men ſpend very little time in daily private devotion. Thoſe, that accuſtom themſelves to daily private prayer, uſe not haply much to examine their own hearts, and take a daily account of their walkings, ſo as to confeſs and ſue for pardon, for every ſin they ſee themſelves that day to have fallen into. Others on the contrary ſide maintain generally ſuch ſtrictneſs in their private devotions daily. And again (2.) There is difference between coming occaſionally a gueſt to the Lords Table, when I did not long before intend it, and coming in my ordinary courſe when I had a weeks notice of it, and intended to come ſo long before. Occaſional communicating I call that, when being abroad on a Lords day, or ſome like ſolemn day; I come into a congregation by me well enough known, and there find the Table prepared, and hear all, who are fit to be gueſts, there preſent

invited

invited to it: or, when being in the family with some dying or decrepitly infirme person; I am invited upon short warning, to make one of that number which are to communicate with him. Chap. 10.

Now for satisfaction to the case put, I say, it being supposed I am a person who maintain such a strict course of daily private devotion, as above described; it cannot be, but that I am well acquainted with my own heart and ways; and there can be little on my conscience to detain me from the Lords Table. In such a case then, it is evident I carry about with me in a manner an *habitual preparation*. If therefore I by a short meditation (to which purpose, if there be any tolerable convenience, I retire, otherwise, I call my soul as it were into private, and commune with mine own heart) if I say by a short meditation I look into my self, and find nothing but that my breast is clear, after some address secretly to God

to

Chap. 10. to dispose my heart for what I intend, I may undoubtedly approach the Lords Table in an acceptable sort: provided I omit nothing of the strictness of that care which I am to take in the act of receiving, nor, or after fidelity. And indeed I do not know, did men live so Christianly as they should; how a Christian can turn his back upon the Lords Supper, whensoever he hath conveniencies for it, without a sinful neglect. And if men do not live so Christianly as they should, I think no one will doubt but that again is a sin; so that generally the turning my back upon the Communion, except it be to leave room for others, or because some other Christian duties at that time call for me, must be concluded sinful; and sinful too, not to live in such an habitual preparation, that, upon occasion, after some communeing with my own heart, I could not safely approach thereunto.

But it must be remembred, this is only

only allowable in grown Christians, and men of strict devotionals; and in these too, rather in their occasional than set and long intended communicating. To others, or to these in their ordinary course of receiving in their own Church; I scarce can judge the former directions of inquireing into themselves a day or two before hand; of fasting and humbling themselves, and taking pains duely to dispose their hearts to the highest pitch of devotion, may be omitted without sin. Chap. 10.

¶ Touching what devotions concern a dying man in order to his communicating; it may not be unexpedient to add somewhat; but I had rather consult more generally touching what preparations for death that man should make, who had formerly in his life for a good space observed the course proposed, both in the foregoing tract of devotion, and this of communicateing.

And

Chap. 10. And for a concluſion to the whole, and by way of commendation of this Method to the practice of all who read it: I will ſay, that in caſe a man have carefully and conſcientiouſly practiſed the foregoing Method, whether he be taken on ſudden by death (from which I never thought it improper to ſay with our Church, *Good Lord deliver us*) or more ſlowly ſummoned and conveighed to his Grave by a diſeaſe; he hath little to do by way of preparation for death, but to continue his former practice.

Sudden death allows little time, but to call ſomewhat generally for Mercy and Pardon, and with ſorrow (as particular as may be) for ſin to caſt my ſelf on God through Chriſt. Death, when it gives warning, calls me to the fulleſt and ſtricteſt practice of repentance, and faith as before conſidered. This then, if I have before conſcientiouſly practiſed home to the time when diſeaſe or other accident

ſummons

ſummons me, I am an happy man, for I have little work to do but to beg my ſincere repentance may be accepted, and to reſt in a comfortable hope, that through my Saviours merits it will be. This hope often fled unto, will overcome the terrours of death. In caſe my diſeaſe be any whit lingring, the reviewing and making ſure my repentance is of irrefragable neceſſity: nor would I by any means omit the Communion. Chap. 10.

But before my participation thereof (ſuppoſing my diſeaſe, I ſay ſo patient) I would, if poſſibly ſet my houſe in order, that is, diſpoſe of my Eſtate, Concerns, and Truſts. and in diſpoſing hereof, if I have it, it behoves me to give with due liberality to the poor, no man alive having been ſo juſt a *Steward* but he hath need by gratifying the poor, to obtain their prayers and bleſſing, that his *waſting his Lords* Goods, may not hinder his being received into *Eternal manſions* of bliſs. Luk 16. 9.

This

Chap. 10

This work of disposing my Estate, though it should not begin my more immediate preparation for death (renewings of my repentance, being supposed first of all to take up my mind) yet ought to be early dispatched, inasmuch as my mind will be freer for Divine contemplation and devotion, when I have taken leave of worldly business.

This then being over, I more solemnly than ever (as far as my power admits) revise my repentance, cast over the sins of my life, beg pardon through Christ, and so prepare my self (as formerly in my health) for this closeing ordinance of my Lords last Supper. In this case, I must by no means neglect to consult with some spiritual Guide; to whom, if I have nothing to unburthen my self of, yet I apply my self to, to receive absolution; the expres words and commission of our Saviour, and the constant practice of the Church, being an irrefragable proof that there is

Joh. 20. 22, 23.

weight

weight in that matter, though not so much as some pretend. Chap. 10.

Having now set all, as far as I can, strait not onely in my own judgement, but in the judgement of that Minister with whom I consult; it is fit (all meet circumstances admitting it) I proceed to partake of the Lords Supper, before which, according to the order of the Church, I receive absolution. I have here little or nothing purely new, being to proceed by my former rules; onely I am to endeavor to raise my devotion to the highest pitch.

The whole office being over, in Divine and Heavenly thoughts, discourses, and prayers should I, as comfortably and gladly as I can await my dissolution: during this time, and possibly again, as neer my dying moment as I can: should I solemnly commend all mine to God, by invokeing the blessing of God on them, and counselling them the best I can to virtue: and above all,

Chap. 18. I would preſs the ſerious practice of Religion upon them. (Mens dying words ſtick longeſt, and he is ſtrongly Atheiſtical, who will not be moved by a dying mans aſſerting and urging the reality of Religion.) Thus, Lord, if thou pleaſeſt, grant I may ſhut up my days.

To conclude, Know good Reader, who lives well, is generally prepared for death. Who comes to the Lords Table otherwiſe prepared, than he would go out of the world, is not prepared as he ſhould be. The former Treatiſe of Devotion, if truely practiſed, leads to an holy and ſtrict life: the preſent to due preparation for the Communion of the body and bloud of Chriſt; ſo that he who will addict himſelf heartily to this practice, will undoubtedly prove an holy perſon, will live prepared for all which can befall him, even death it ſelf: and him, whom ſuch an happineſs, as to be a real Saint, ready

ready to pass hence into Eternity of blessedness, free from all harms, dangers, and fears for ever, will not move to a practice in it self so amiable, so pleasant, so advantagious, I can only say, *The Lord have mercy on him*: but he hath nothing in himself, save his misery, to commend him to that mercy: and whether his guiltiness will not obstruct mercy, let him look, I should not dare to run such hazard. Chap. 20.

FINIS.